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FRANCIA

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Chantilly

*The Annunciation
with St. Albert the Carmelite.*

FRANCESCO RAIBOLINI

CALLED

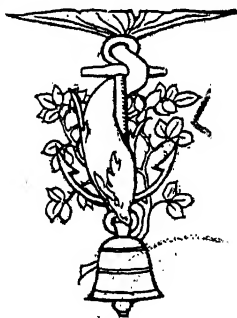
FRANCIA

BY

GEORGE C. WILLIAMSON, LITT.D.

AUTHOR OF

"JOHN RUSSELL, R.A.," "RICHARD COSWAY, R.A., AND
HIS WIFE AND PUPILS," "PORTRAIT MINIATURES,"
"BERNARDINO LUINI," "PERUGINO," "GUIDE
TO THE TOWNS OF NORTH ITALY," ETC



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PREFACE

BESIDES Vasari, there is, so far as I know, but one life of Francia available for the English reader—the very slight one issued by Mrs. Ady in 1881, as part of a small book that she wrote on “Mantegna and Francia.” The works on this artist in Italian also are mostly very scarce, having been issued many years ago, some as far back as 1630, and they are consequently not of much service to the ordinary student. There are a few works to be met with in French, notably the important one on the Bolognese painters issued in 1875 by Blanc and Delaborde.

A variety of facts regarding the pictures by this master has, however, been lately discovered; and it seemed to me that a fitting moment had arrived to issue a new work on the artist, especially as a study of his works had come naturally in sequence to follow my study of the paintings of Perugino.

The chief claim that I can make in these pages is that they represent the result of a great deal of careful and personal hard work in Bologna, and that they contain several new items of information about the artist, which it was my good fortune to light upon in searching some of the records of that delightful city.

I believe that the extracts that I make from Oretti's manuscript as to pictures, the information as to the visit of Perugino to Bologna, the identification of the Scappi

as Notaries, the story of the painting of the picture now at Chantilly, the record explaining the history of the Gozzadini predella at Bologna, the story of the jewel made by Francia, the name of the donor of the Miramonte altar-piece, the identification of the scenery in many pictures, and, above all, the story of the Buonvisi picture in the National Gallery, with the date and the reasons for its various saints, are all published for the first time, and will be new to most of the students of Francia.

There are also certain extracts that I have been able to make from the original Guild-books that have not before been issued.

Calvi's charming little book on Francia, although little more than a pamphlet, has been my chief authority for points that I have been unable to trace out for myself; and I have not scrupled to use his pages freely, as the pamphlet was issued in Bologna in 1812, and is now difficult to obtain.

I have spent many days with the pictures in Bologna, and have had special facilities given me for examining them very closely; and I can honestly say that the opinions as to them, and the details found on them which I have enunciated in this work, are the result of my own examination, and for them I alone can be held responsible.

In some instances I have had to differ from established opinion; but I have not done so without most careful deliberation, and have tried to show in each case my reasons for the adoption of so hazardous a procedure.

I am deeply indebted to Doctor Frati of the Archiginnasio, Bologna, for most valuable assistance in my

searches, to Signor Martelli for obtaining for me certain scarce works on Francia, and to Signor Frank, of the Hôtel Brun, for the generous aid and kindness which at all times he has shown me.

I am very grateful to the authorities of the Museo Civico at Bologna, of the British Museum, and to Messrs. Head, Grueber, Samuel Smith, and W. S. Churchill, for information as to the coins connected with Francia; to Professor Langton Douglas, Mr. Herbert Cook, and Mr. Bernhard Berenson, for criticism, opinions, and information; to Mr. J. E. Taylor, for having had his picture photographed; and to Sir G. O. Trevelyan, Lord Northbrook, and many others, for facts regarding the works in their possession; to Signor Supino, for permission to quote from his most valuable work on Italian medals, and for permission to have casts made from some of the medals under his charge in the Bargello; also to Messrs. Longman and Murray, for permission to quote from their copyright books, and to a host of other friends who have considerately aided me in many ways.

To each and to all, and also to any persons whom I have unwittingly left out of my expression of gratitude, I return my very grateful thanks.

G. C. W.

THE MOUNT,
GUILDFORD.

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FRANCIA

CHAPTER I

THE GOLDSMITH, MEDALLIST, DIE-SINKER, GEM- ENGRAVER, AND TYPE-FOUNDER

VASARI records the date of the birth of Francia as 1450, and it is probable that he is right in this assertion. Calvi, who wrote a short life of the artist in 1812, to which reference will be constantly made in these pages, ascertained that the master matriculated in the Goldsmiths' Guild in 1482, on September 10, and in the following year, 1483, was appointed Master of the Guild. He also found that, by the statutes of the Guild, no one could be Master who had not attained the age of thirty years, and we may therefore conclude that the birth of the artist took place from about 1448 to 1454.

His parents Vasari describes as artisans, but this is hardly the right manner in which to speak of them. The family was an old one, and well known in Bologna, where its members had held office for several generations in the highest positions in the government of the place, and had possessed land in the commune of Zola Predosa from the early part of the fourteenth century, even, it is said, as far back as 1308. At the time of Francia's

birth the family was not in good circumstances, and the land appears to have been temporarily charged, but the name of his father, Marco di Giacomo Raibolini, was still held in high repute, and appears in the civic records in various important offices.

Francesco's father had matriculated in the art of a wood-carver, but the son desired to work in metals, and was accordingly bound to a clever goldsmith named Duc, who was generally called Francia, and from his master's name the pupil took his own cognomen, by which he is generally styled. It is evident, from the description that Vasari gives of the young Raibolini, that he was a very charming fellow. He was bright and cheerful, full of good-humour, and excellent in conversation, while his courtesy and obliging disposition won him many friends. As a goldsmith, he seems to have been very popular, and his work was in constant demand.* We are told from documents that, in 1488, he sent to Leonora, Duchess of Ferrara, an exquisite chain of gold hearts linked together, which was probably a bridal present for Elizabeth Gonzaga, sister of Isabella d'Este's betrothed husband, who had visited Ferrara that spring on her way to Urbino. From this it is evident that the fame of Raibolini had extended beyond the region of Bologna; and this is not an isolated case, as other documents speak of the works of this artist in gold, which were known at Mantua and at Parma,

* Camillus Leonardus, in his "*Speculum Lapidum*" (Venice, 1516), wrote thus of Francia: "*Virum cognosco in hac celeberrimum, ac sūmum nomine Franciscum Bononiensem aliter Franzam qui adeo in tam parvo orbiculo, seu argenti lamina, tot homines, tot animalia, tot montes, arbores, castra ac tot diversa ratione situque posita, figurat, seu incidit, quod dictu ac visu mirabile apparet.*"



Poppi photo

SHIELD PRESERVED IN THE CASA RODRIGREZ, BOLOGNA

PLATE I

and he is even mentioned in a contemporary letter of 1486, written in Florence, as "Raibolini, the famous goldsmith of Bologna, who will be able to give you the chain that you want." The fine shield (Plate I.) which was done for the Bentivoglio family, and which is now preserved at the Casa Rodrigrez in Bologna, is an example of another kind of metal-work that was successfully adopted by the artist. It is of decorated *cuir bouilli*, bearing upon its surface a bold, spirited representation of a knight in full armour vanquishing a dragon, which he is at the moment transfixing with a long lance. The knight may be St. Michael or St. George, or merely a familiar representation of the champion of the family at the time. He bears in his hand the shield of Bentivoglio, and is not depicted as a heavenly warrior, but simply as a courageous knight. His horse is finely drawn and full of life, and the dragon, a loathsome beast, is showing fight well, and has torn up the ground around him in a valiant attempt to escape from his foe. Around the shield is a broad band of metal-work, in which are wrought two inscriptions, one metal, a white one, probably silver, being inlaid upon the other, which appears to be a rich yellow bronze. The shield is curved to fit the body, and the inscriptions, according to the habit of the day, are taken from Scripture, and allude in a fanciful manner first to the approach of the family champion, and to his ability to elude his foes; and, secondly, to his desire to fight the fight alone, and his wish to bear the entire burden of the struggle, and for his attendants and relations to be allowed to go free.

The inscriptions are as follows :

IESVS AVEM RANSIENS P MDM ILLorM IBAT.

"But He passing through the midst of them went His way" (St. Luke iv. 30).

SI ERG QERITIS SINITE s ABIRE.

"If therefore you seek Me, let these go their way" (St. John xviii. 8).

Vasari states that the work which delighted Francia above all other occupations was the cutting of dies for medals, and that in this he was considered excellent, and his works most admirable. He specially speaks of the medals of Giovanni Bentivoglio, and of those of Pope Julius II., which were, he says, so fine that the heads seem to be alive on them. It has been ascertained that the artist was Director of the Zecca, or Mint, at Bologna, and on November 19, 1508, was given the entire charge of the provision of money for the city.

Vasari states that the whole of the dies for the coins used at the time when the Bentivogli governed in Bologna were prepared by Raibolini, and also the money struck for Pope Julius II. after their departure, and during the whole of that Pontiff's life, and he instances the money coined by the Pope on his entrance to the city bearing his head on one side, and on the other the words BONONIA . PER . JVLIVM . A . TYRANNO . LIBERATA, with the figure of St. Peter.* Vasari further records

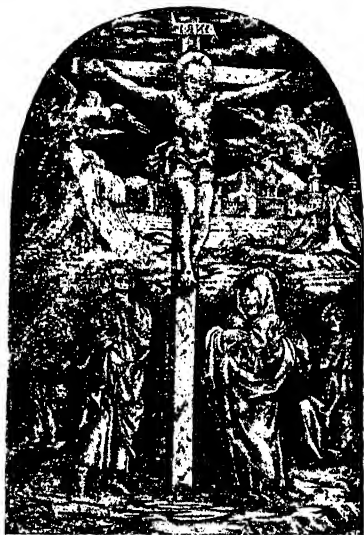
* Calvi states that these medals were given away in the streets to the people as the Pope made his triumphant entrance into the city; and this is not at all unlikely, as the custom was a favourite one; but the dies must have been made and the medals struck ere the Pope



No. 1



No. 2



No. 5



No. 3



No. 4

GOLD COINS AND A NIELLO PRINT BY FRANCIA

that so skilful was our artist considered to be in this respect that he continued to make dies for the coinage down to the time of Leo X., and that his medallions were so highly valued that they are in great demand and not easily to be obtained.

It is probable that the entire statement must be received with caution, and that Vasari, in his usual inaccurate manner, was confusing coins with medals, as the coinage done for Leo X. does not show any signs of being the work of Raibolini, nor even of being influenced by the traditions of the Bologna Mint.

There are, however, two zecchini of gold that were struck in Bologna for Bentivoglio and were in all probability the work of the artist, as the same lettering and the same style of drawing are to be seen upon them as on the medals. They read IOANNES . BENTIVOLVS . II . BONONIENSIS . on the obverse, with the head of the Governor, and on the reverse the arms of the Bentivogli, with the inscription IMPERA . MVNVS . MAXIMILIANI . (Plate II., Figs. 1 and 2). The smaller gold coin is almost identical, save that the final two letters of the word BONONIENSIS and the word IMPERA are omitted, and the coat of arms does not possess the crest (Plate II., Figs. 3 and 4). The money named by Vasari (zecchino, grosso, and half-grosso) is of greater interest, as, in addition to the inscription recording the liberation of the city from the tyranny of the Bentivogli by the Supreme Pontiff and

reached the city, and while he was resting in one of the neighbouring towns. In that case he must have already heard of Francia, and sent him his commands, and this would account for the fact that the artist did not leave the place with his patron when he was driven away.

his assumption again of the ruling power, these coins have upon them a lovely design of interlaced branches of a rose-tree, forming part of the Della Rovere arms—an ornament that the artist evidently loved, as it is to be found also upon his paintings, and, as it appears upon the paintings (as far as I am aware) of no other man at that period, it is of great service in identifying the works of this painter-goldsmith who so lovingly used it as his mark, out of respect, perhaps, to his great patron.*

It is well just to refer to the curious fact that the portraits of the Pope on the coins, and especially on the medals, are, as pointed out by Mr. Keary, "curiously unlike those by Raphael in the Stanze of the Vatican and in the Pitti Palace, and that the difference does not lie only in the presence of a beard in the later portraits by Raphael." It is quite evident to an observer that between the date of the medals (1505-6) and that of the portraits (1511-13) there had been a great change in the aspect of the Pontiff—a change from the appearance of a warlike general to that of a peaceful patron of the fine arts, and a determined ruler of the Holy See.

The most notable medals done by Francia for Giovanni Bentivoglio II., who was Governor of the city from 1443 to 1509, bear the following inscriptions. The first reads IOANNES . BENTIVOLVS . II . BONONIENSIS, with a head of the Governor wearing a flat cap or biretta on one side, and on the other the inscription MAXIMILIANI . IMPERATORIS . MVNVS . MCCCCLXXXIII . (1494). The

* Cuiagli, "Monete de' Papi," 1848. Plate CXIX., 12; also Argelati, "De Monetis Italiae," 1750-59, 6 vols.



No. 2

Nos. 3 and 4

No. 1

other is very much smaller, and has on one side the words IOANNES . SECVNDVS . BENTIVOLVS, and on the other the arms of the family, with the words PRINCEPS . HANNIBALIS . FI . R . P . BONON. The larger one is in bronze, and is cast (Plate III., Figs. 1 and 2); the smaller one in silver, and is struck (Plate IV., Figs. 1 and 2).

Of Pope Julius II. there are six medals attributed to the hand of Raibolini, as he must for the present be called. Two were struck only in gold, one in gold and in silver, one in silver and in bronze, and one in bronze only, and this latter one was done for the Mint in Rome, where the original die is still preserved, whilst the others were done for the Mint at Bologna. The silver one reads IVLIVS . SECVNDVS . LIGVR . P . M . on one side, with an effigy of the Pontiff wearing a biretta and cope, and on the other a representation of St. Paul, on the road to Damascus, being suddenly struck with blindness, and a further inscription on what is known to medallists as the exergue of the medal: CONTRA . STIMVLVM . NE . CALCITRES. The medal which is found both in silver and in gold is the same size as this one, and almost exactly like it, save that it has the figure II. on the obverse instead of the word SECVNDVS (Plate V., Figs. 3 and 4).

There are two found in gold only, and of these one exactly resembles, on its obverse, the one last named; but, instead of the scene from the life of St. Paul, it bears, on the reverse, a representation of the sanctuary of the holy house of Loreto, which the Pontiff visited in 1507, and the great privileges of which he augmented by a Bull dated October 21, 1507. The inscription on

this reverse is *TEMPLVM . VIRG . LAVRETI . MDVIII*. The other of the gold medals is larger, and has upon the reverse a representation of a shepherd, seated upon the ground, attending to his flock, who are grazing around him, and the one word *TVTELA*; while on the obverse it resembles the last noted one, bearing the words *IVLIVS . II . LIGVR . P . M*.

The bronze one done for the Papal Zecca at Rome is a particularly fine piece of die-sinking, full of detail, exquisitely sharp, and most gracefully drawn. The inscription on the obverse is *IVLIVS . LIGVR . PAPA . SECVNDS*, and the Pope is bare-headed and wearing a richly-ornamented cope. On the reverse is a standing figure of a woman crowned with ears of corn, and bearing in her hand a full cornucopia, from which with her other hand she is withdrawing and holding out a sheaf of grain. The inscription is *ANNONA . PVBLICA*, and the allusion is most evidently to the care taken by the Sovereign Pontiff of his people in providing them with food during the famine of 1505 (Plate V., Figs. 5 and 6). Once more was Raibolini's work seen in Rome in the same direction of medallic art, for many years after he had executed this fine medal for Julius II. he was summoned by Clement VII. to execute a similar medal for him in the same size, and, as the original die, still in existence in the Papal Mint, will show, having upon it all the same marks of fine workmanship and exquisite detail. This medal has upon the reverse an effigy of the Pope, bare-headed, wearing a rich cope, upon the orphreys of which are two figures of female saints, and the morse of which bears a representation of the Saviour.



No 1.

Nos. 3 and 4

No. 2

MEDALS BY FRANCIA

On the obverse is an interesting scene: Joseph is seated on a throne ornamented with the Medici arms, and around him in various attitudes are his eleven brethren. The inscription is EGO . SVM . IOSEPH . FRATER . VESTER, and the allusion is to the affection that the Pontiff continued to bear towards the Florentine people, notwithstanding their attitude towards him. This medal has been at times attributed to Bonanni, Venuti, and even to Benvenuto Cellini; but the documents have now been found that make its attribution to Raibolini a matter of clear evidence. The grouping of the brothers is admirable, and every face within the narrow limits of the medal is treated with distinction, and with infinite care for expression (Plate V., Figs. 1 and 2).

There remain for consideration two other medals which it is known Raibolini executed, and which are of far grander proportion than those that have yet been mentioned. One was done for the Legate of the city of Bologna, Francesco Alidosi, who was Cardinal in 1505, and Legate in 1508, and who is represented upon this superb medal in his Cardinal's biretta and mozette.

The inscription reads as follows: FR . ALIDOXIVS . CAR . PAPIEN . BON . ROMANDIOLAE . Q . C . LEGAT . On the reverse is represented Jupiter holding his fulmen in his hand, and standing in a chariot which is drawn by two eagles. Below, in the exergue of the medal, are the signs of Sagittarius and the Fishes. The inscription on this side reads: HIS . AVIBVS . CVRRVQ . CITO . DVCKERIS . AD . ASTRA (Plate III., Figs. 3 and 4). The other medal represents Bernardo Rossi, Count of Berceto, who was Governor of Bologna in 1519, and who, like the Cardinal, is depicted in biretta and mozette. The

legend reads: BER . RV . CO . B . EPS . TAR . LE . BO . VIC . GV . ET . PRAE. On the reverse is a woman standing in a chariot, bearing a branch in her hand, and being drawn by an eagle and a dragon coupled together, the inscription being OB . VIRTUTES . IN . FLAMINIAM . RESTITVTAS (Plate IV., Figs. 3 and 4). Both these medals are large, 65 millimetres across, and are powerfully drawn and in very high relief. The faces are clear cut, and very full of character, and the lettering is big and clear, and they have all the special marks of Raibolini's lettering and classic style of draughtsmanship.

Fine as are these medals, it was not as a medallist that Raibolini did his best work in these goldsmith days, but as a worker in niello. This work, which must not be confused with enamel, was a method of producing delicate and minute decoration upon a polished metal surface by incised lines, filled in with a black metallic amalgam, the black substance differing from true enamel in being metallic and not vitreous. In the sixteenth century it was in great vogue, and is often mentioned by Vasari, notably in what he has to say as to Cellini and Maso Finiguerra.

According to Theophilus, a monk who wrote in the twelfth or thirteenth centuries ("Div. Art. Sch. Hendrie," edit. 1847), the process was as follows: The design was cut with a sharp tool on the metal. An alloy was formed of two parts silver, one-third copper, and one-sixth lead. To this mixture, while fluid in the crucible, powdered sulphur in excess was added, and the brittle amalgam, when cold, was finely pounded and sealed up in large quills for use. A solution of borax to act as a flux was brushed over the metal plate and



No. 1

Bronze



No. 2



No. 3

Gold and Silver



No. 4



No. 5

Bronze



No. 6

PAPAL MEDALS OF JULIUS II. IN GOLD, SILVER, AND BRONZE, AND OF CLEMENT VII. IN BRONZE ONLY, BY FRANCA

thoroughly worked into its incised lines. The powdered amalgam was then shaken on to the plate so as to completely cover the engraved design. The plate was then carefully heated over a charcoal fire, fresh amalgam being added, as the powder fused, upon any defective places. When the powder had become thoroughly liquid so as to fill up all the lines, the plate was allowed to cool, and the whole surface was scraped so as to remove the superfluous niello, leaving only what had sunk into and filled up the engraved pattern. Last of all the nielloed plate was very highly polished till it presented the appearance of a smooth metal surface enriched with a delicate design in fine gray-black lines. The contrast was very vivid between the whiteness of the silver and the darkness of the niello, and as the slightest scratch upon the metal received the niello and became a distinct black line, ornament of the most minute and refined description could easily be produced. There is much of this work to be seen in Italy, especially in vessels and ornaments intended for ecclesiastical use, and Raibolini became well known for the beauty of the nielli that he produced. The art had been known since the days of the Romans, but was brought to perfection in the sixteenth century, and many great artists, as Brunelleschi, Pollajuolo, Cellini, and Caradosso, as well as Raibolini, practised it with success.

Raibolini is known to have executed at great cost a famous silver pax as a wedding-gift on the occasion of the marriage of Giovanni Sforza and Lucrezia Borgia, but that has disappeared. There are works attributed to him in the Bargello, notably a fine chalice, a paten, and a pax; but at Bologna are still preserved two pieces

of niello that are undoubtedly the work of the master. They are very different one from the other. The earlier one (Plate VI.) is the smaller, and, being adorned with the arms, in enamel, of the Sforza and Bentivoglio families, was probably intended as a wedding-gift from Giovanni Bentivoglio to his bride, Ginevra Sforza. It represents the Crucifixion, and at the foot of the cross are four figures, probably the Blessed Virgin, St. John the Divine, St. Jerome, kneeling, and St. Francis. In the rear is a mountainous landscape with Jerusalem amidst the rocks, and above are two angels in flight. The grouping is essentially Bolognese, and the faces of the Christ and the saints, minute although they are, will be seen repeated in the paintings of the master later on. The lines of the niello are extremely fine and delicate, and the tiny composition is full of feeling. It is enshrined in an arch, which is decorated with green foliage, and bears at its spandrils two shields, having upon them the arms already named worked in their heraldic colours. On either side of this arch are richly decorated pilasters of wrought silver, bearing upon them a pediment having the words engraved upon it MEMORARE . NOVISSIMA . TVA . ET . IN . ETĒNŪ . NŌ . PECCABIS. Above this is engraved in the silver a representation of Christ spreading forth His wounded hands, and on either side of Him is an adoring angel. The letters M. Z. are engraved by the shield of arms. The other pax ($3\frac{9}{16} \times 2\frac{5}{16}$) must be attributed to a later date, more about the time of 1500, and is a finer, bolder work, very individual in its characteristics, and is set in a frame that is of stronger, grander work than is the more minute and



Bologna Gallery

NIELLO PAX WITH "THE CRUCIFIXION"

niggling detail of the smaller one. The square faces, short stature and stiff drawing of the smaller pax bespeak the earlier work of Raibolini, and recall his pictures of 1488 and 1490, but in this pax depicting the Resurrection there is a very different handling. Like the other, it was probably intended for a wedding present, and bears in two shields upon its base the arms of the Felicini and Ringhieri families, denoting that it was given on the occasion of the marriage of Bartolommeo Felicini with Dorothea Ringhieri (Plate VII.). The Christ is a tall, dignified figure, stepping gloriously from the tomb, bearing in one hand a flag of victory, and having the other upraised in benediction. The encircling frame is an arch, rising from a square-ended base, and is adorned throughout its course with a bold foliage decoration of happy design enclosed within a lovely worked moulding of leaves. The decoration on the arch is in much higher relief than is any of the work on the smaller pax, and exhibits an ease and grace in its design that far exceed the beauty of the earlier work. In the figures of the four sleeping soldiers at the tomb can also be seen good, strong drawing, far better than any of the work on the earlier pax.

In the Museo Civico Cristiano at Brescia there is another fine pax, very similar to the ones at Bologna, which has been attributed by some persons to Francia, but which I cannot accept as his work.

The frame, which is an architectural one of finely wrought silver, bears the closest resemblance, both in design and in workmanship, to the two in Bologna, even to the fact that the mouldings and ornaments of leaves are similar, and the twin columns which support

the lunette are almost exactly the same as those which Francia did.

It is quite possible that this frame may have been the work of our artist, but the niello which it contains is certainly not the work of his hand, and in its strenuous archaic forcefulness has a far closer resemblance to the productions of Signorelli, Pollajuolo, or some earlier artist, than to the work of Francia. The whole thing is very charming and delightfully wrought, but it is not to be connected with Francia.

The process of working in niello led in an indirect manner to the discovery of engraving on a plate, and the honour of making this important discovery is usually given to one of the earlier Italian niellists, one Maso Finiguerra.

Whilst a niello was in progress the artist could not see the work so well as if the black material (*nigellum*) was already in the lines, and on the other hand he did not wish to insert the black substance prematurely, as when once it was set it could not easily be removed. He therefore took a sulphur cast of the niello in progress, and his method is thus described by Lanzi in his "*Storia Pittorica della Italia*" (Roscoe's trans., vol. i., p. 100): "When he had cut the plate he next proceeded to take a print of it before he inlaid it with niello upon very fine earth, and from the cut being to the right hand, and hollow, the proof consequently came out on the left, showing the little earthen cast in relief. Upon this last he threw the liquid sulphur, from which he obtained a second proof, which, of course, appeared to the right, and took from the relief a hollow form. He then laid the ink (lamp-black mixed with



Bologna Gallery

NIELLO PAX WITH "THE RESURRECTION"

oil) upon the sulphur in such a way as to fill up the hollows on the more indented cuts, intended to produce the shadow, and next, by degrees, he scraped away from the ground (of the sulphur) what was meant to produce the light. The final work was to polish it with oil in order to give the sulphur the bright appearance of silver." With moistened paper he then obtained a proof of his work from the second sulphur cast, pressing it into the sulphur with his hand, and by that means printing on to the paper the design that was being worked upon the plate. It was, of course, needful to make the pressure very carefully, as the sulphur would easily break, and the impression therefore was but a slight and uneven one; but very speedily this idea was expanded, and the niello plate itself was filled with the ink, and from it a far finer impression was taken by means of damped paper, and in this case a roller was used in order that every part of the paper should come into contact with the plate. Whether this method was the usual one adopted by niellists, or was first introduced by Maso Finiguerra, is not definitely known; but it is believed that he was the first to use it, and there is in existence an impression taken in this way and reversed, as would naturally be the case, which it is clear is taken from the pax in the Bargello that is attributed to Maso Finiguerra, and is usually accepted as his work. It is possible that the method once discovered was used by other workers in niello than Maso during his period, but if that is so their works are not known, and there are no prints that can be attributed with any certainty to the goldsmith Baccio Baldini, whom Vasari mentions as the successor of Maso Fini-

guerra in this early engraving work. Twenty-five of the sulphur casts made by the niellists are still in existence, and it seems likely that such casts were made after a while as ornaments for decoration of altars, etc., and sold for such purposes, and that in this way the process adopted at first for the convenience of the worker became a source of further profit to him. In the same way the better plan adopted of making the impressions from the niello itself instead of from the sulphur casts was really the beginning of plate engraving; but it was regarded solely as a method of proving the plate, and it was not until a very much later period that it was recognised as an art in itself, and then carried on to the great and wonderful results of which plate engraving was capable.

From whom Raibolini learned the art is not known; but inasmuch as an impression exists in the Albertina Museum at Vienna (Plate II., Fig. 5) which is evidently taken from the pax at Bologna, and proves by the reversed letters I. N. R. I (IϱNI) above the cross that it was taken on paper from the actual niello without the intervention of a sulphur cast, it is clear that he had learned the art of making these impressions and practised it. Calvi attributes to Raibolini a very rare engraving of "The Baptism of our Saviour" (B.* XIV., 22), and Passavant unhesitatingly accepts this attribution. Bartsch had given this print to Marcantonio, numbering it in his list as twenty-two; but no one had pointed out until Mr. Richard Fisher did so, in his note on the engravings of Marcantonio, written for the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1886, that this print is

* B. = Bartsch.

identical both in character and treatment with a painting by Raibolini that still exists at Hampton Court; and there can now be added to this confirmation the still further evidence that is afforded by the painting of "The Baptism" at Dresden closely resembling the print, and in which the same figure of the Christ that appears in it and at Hampton Court can be seen. Duchesne gives to Raibolini four niello prints—"The Nativity," "The Crucifixion," "The Resurrection," and "A Woman attended by Three Men and a Satyr." Of these, "The Crucifixion" and "The Resurrection" are from the Bologna paxes. Passavant adds one more—"The Judgment of Paris" (Bartsch, 339); but with this attribution I cannot at all agree, as the workmanship does not accord with that of any of the accepted works. Two early engravings are given by Fisher to the artist—that of "Samson and the Lion" (D. 18) and "SS. Catharine and Lucia" (B. XIV., 121); and, in addition to these, there is in the British Museum an engraving from his own design of "The Virgin," with the Infant Saviour in her hands, seated enthroned in the centre, a saint standing on either side (P. V., 201, 2). There is also a print of "Lucretia" (B. XV., 458, 4)—a work of great attractiveness and beauty, the upper part of which is in exquisite drawing, rivalling the well-known "Lucretia" of Marcantonio. A fine impression of this print is to be found in the Louvre. "David and Goliath" is given by Ottley to Raibolini, and I am disposed to attribute to him the "St. Jerome" (7 in his facsimiles), as it closely resembles the St. Jerome in his undoubted "Crucifixion." These are all the prints

that can be attributed to Raibolini with any strong reason, but they do not exhaust the list of those which connoisseurs are disposed in their own collections to give to the famous worker. There are especially many prints that are signed "I. F.," in a monogram, which are catalogued by Bartsch under the joint names of Raibolini and his son Giacomo, and which might with good probability be given to the elder artist alone; but there is not sufficient evidence to warrant the ascription at present, and from internal evidence it is impossible to say as regards this group of prints that they were the work of two separate hands or that one shows any more than another who was the designer who suggested it or who engraved it.

The number of genuine niello prints in existence is exceedingly small, and this is not a matter of great surprise, as the proofs were only taken by the niello worker for his own information, without any idea of their value, and were in all probability cast aside after use, and only preserved as beautiful things by those persons who were interested in the artist or had to do with the pax or other Church ornament upon which he was at the time engaged. As soon as the demand arose for these prints, and attention had been directed to their importance as the precursors of the art of engraving upon metal, there came the day of the forger; and in the second decade of the present century two ingenious Venetians—Pirone and Zanetti—started making niello-work, and producing these coveted early prints for sale to the connoisseurs of Europe. The greatest care has therefore to be taken in the examination of these little treasures, and any decision

based upon them is usually confined to the group of prints, of undoubtedly genuine antiquity, known, from their possessor in 1774, as the Durazzo prints, thirty-two in number, or to the few extra ones known to exist in the national collections of Europe.

Of niello prints, not one is proved to have been taken from the sulphur casts, but all are believed to have been printed direct from the niello. Although, as has been stated, some twenty-five of the sulphur casts still remain (nineteen belonging to the British Museum and six to Baron Edmond de Rothschild of Paris), yet not one print that it is quite certain was taken from them, bearing marks of the incomplete impression that it would naturally have, can be traced, and in all probability all of these earliest prints have long ago perished. The sulphurs would not have been so well preserved but that they were worked into the decoration of a small portable altar that belonged to a branch house of the convent of the Camaldoli in the mountains near to Florence, whence they were sold in 1818.

The engravings done by Raibolini bear no signature or date to aid us in our identification of them, and it is only by their characteristics that we are able to fix the name of their artist. The niello print, which is illustrated in this book (Plate II.), bears upon itself the proof of its origin, and others, from their association in design and resemblance in drawing with his pictures, have been recognised. The faces of those in the British Museum bear, as Mr. Fisher has well said, "the expression and feeling of Raibolini's drawing, the timidity of the lips and the inquiring nervousness of

the eyes, which are such marked characteristics of his pencil, being conspicuous in them." One only bears a mark, but that has no intelligible connection with the master, as it is the letters "D. A. F." under a curved line, and it is to be found only upon the late state of the print of "The Madonna holding the Infant Saviour, attended by St. Francis and St. Anthony of Padua," in the British Museum (P. V., 201, 2). See p. 121.

It may be well, perhaps, at this place to refer briefly to the celebrated pupils who were trained by the artist, one of whom certainly in this special work went far beyond his master, and gained world-wide fame. Peregrini, whose signature as DE : OPVS . PEREGRINI . CES., or OPVS . PEREGRINO, or simply O.P.D.C. or P. alone, is to be found on several niello prints, was probably one of Raibolini's pupils; but whether he came from Cesena or from Cento or Cesio is not known, although he is generally considered to have been a native of the little town of Cesena, which boasts of the possession of the Malatesta Library, the only perfect medieval chained library still preserved in Italy.

A far greater man was Marcantonio Raimondi, who in his early years was admitted into the master's studio, and soon became his favourite pupil, and acquired the cognomen of "de Franci." He was born about 1488, and his earliest print was done when he was about nineteen years old, a lad in the workshop of his master. It is an illustration for the story of "Pyramus and Thisbe," dated 1505. Later on, with the good wishes of his master, he went to Venice, and there produced works, based upon the engravings of Dürer, which had just reached that city; and in 1510 he went to

Rome, and commenced that career as an engraver for Raphael that brought to him such fame. He was a most skilful draughtsman and ingenious engraver, and perhaps some of the very finest works that were ever drawn upon copper were his. In his hands the art that had commenced in so tentative and nervous a manner but a few short years before—merely as a help to the niello worker—became a great art, and capable in the hands of so skilful a man of the grandest and finest results. After the terrible sack of Rome in 1527, Marcantonio returned to his native city of Bologna, where he died a few years later.

This chapter, describing Raibolini as a worker in metal, has yet two other crafts to refer to—those of working in jewels and designing and casting type. Niccolo Serradenari, who wrote a short biography of the artist, specially refers to him as an artificer of jewels, and the papers preserved at Mantua mention a long chain set with “engraved gems curiously mounted in gold so as to turn around,” made by Raibolini as a gift for the Duchess of Mantua. As a type-founder he also attained a considerable repute, and will always be remembered as the man who made for Aldus Manutius the first famous “italic” type.

In April, 1501, Aldus produced his “Virgil,” an octavo work of 228 leaves, bearing the following imprint, “Venetiis ex aedibus Aldi Romani mense aprili M.DI.” This was the first book printed by Aldus in his Italic type, and in the typographic world it caused a revolution. It was the earliest attempt to produce cheap books by compressing the matter into a small space, and by reducing the size of the page,

and it is believed that the handwriting of Petrarch suggested the size and design of the letters. The type is what is called "lower case," only the capitals being Roman in form. It contains a large number of tied letters, to imitate handwriting, but is quite free from contractions and ligatures. It was counterfeited almost immediately, and in 1503 a "Petrarch" was printed at Fano by one Hieronymo Soncino, in which the printer in his colophon accuses Aldus unjustly of having claimed for himself the merit of the invention of the italic character, which was, he says, due to Francesco da Bologna (Plate VIII.). As a matter of fact, this Francesco da Bologna had, it is said, designed and cast all the previous founts of type used by Aldus, but none of them had attracted special attention till this very beautiful type appeared. The "Virgil" is extremely rare, three copies on vellum being known; and the "Petrarch," printed at Fano, is rarer still; but the type, once introduced, rapidly made its way, and became very popular. Originally it was called Venetian or Aldine, but subsequently italic type, except in Germany and Holland, where it is called "cursive." The Italians also adopted the Latin names "*characteres cursivi seu cancellarii*." In England it was first used by Wynkyn de Worde in his "Oratio" in 1524. First intended and used for classical works throughout, it was after a while employed to distinguish parts of a book not properly belonging to the text, latterly for quotations or for words that do not rightly form part of the text, and finally for special emphasis on certain words and passages. It was produced in six different sizes by Francesco da Bologna,

fibile adire: ma anchora vn nobilissimo scul-
 ptore de littere latine græce et hebraice. ch'a-
 mato. M. Frãcesco. da Bologna. l'igeno del q-
 le certamẽte credo che in tale exercitio nõ tro-
 ue vnaltro eguale. Perche non solo le vsitate
 stampe perfectamente sa fare: ma etiam ha ex-
 cogitato vna noua forma de littera dicta cursi-
 ua, o vero cãcellaresca. de la quale non Aldo
 Romano, ne altri che astutamente hanno tẽ-
 tato de le altrui pẽne adornarse, Ma esso. M.
 Francesco e stato primo inuentore & designa-
 tore. el quale e tuẽte le forme de littere che
 mai habbia stampato dicto Aldo ha in taglia-
 to, e la præsente forma. cõ tanta gratia e venu-
 state, quanta facilmente in essa se comprende.
 Et p che tutti semo humili & deuoti vasalli de
 tua Excellentia: & alla nostra vera seruitu se
 apertene sempre innuocare el felice auspicio de
 te nostro Illustrissimo & clementissimo Prin-
 cipe: & a quello offerrire le primitie de le no-
 stre exigue lucubratione. Pertal respecto
 destinamo & dedicamo la præsente opa a tua
 Excellentia, non per cosa noua, ne conuenien-
 te a quella, dedita nõ a gli amorosi stipendij,
 ma a la militar disciplina; laquale con gli so-
 clari & admirandi gesti in questo nostro secu-
 lo sommamente amplifica, & adorna. Ma so-
 lo per dar qualche cognitiõe a tua Excellen-

between 1501 and 1558. It will be noticed that Aldus from the very first gave the credit for designing it to his type-founder, Francesco da Bologna, in the following lines which appear in the book:

ALDVS STVDIOSIS
OMNIBVS .S.

*P.V.M. Bucolica. Georgica. Aeneida quam emenda-
ta, et qua forma damus, uidetis. cætera, quæ Poe-
ta exercendi sui gratia composuit, et obscæna, quæ ei-
dem adscribuntur, non censuimus digna enchiridio.
Est animus dare posthac iisdem formulis optimos
quosque authores. Valete.*

IN GRAMMATOGLYPTAE
LA VDEM.

*Qui graiis dedit Aldus, en latinis
D at nunc grammata sculpta dedaleis
Francisci manibus Bononiensis,*

PAGE FROM THE ALDINE VIRGIL

PLATE IX

For some time there was a controversy as to whether this type-founder was, or was not, to be connected with Francesco Raibolini, called Francia. The discovery, however, of a book printed by Leonardi in 1502, in which the same style of type is used and given in

unmistakable terms to Francesco da Bologna, "aliter Franza," opened the question for further investigation, and then it was noticed that Azzoguidi of Bologna had used a somewhat similar type in his "Ovid," printed in 1471, which also was said to be the work of one "Franze di Bologna." Eventually Sir Anthony Panizzi dealt with the entire question in an able manner in his tract,* and, investigating all the authorities, was able in the most definite manner to settle the question that Francesco da Bologna was undoubtedly the same man as "Francesco Raibolini detto il Francia." It has been suggested that the first book intended to be set up in this new type was "Le Cose Volgari di Messer Francesco Petrarca," actually issued in the July of the same year ("del mese di Luglio MDI"), and that it was being set up from a manuscript in Petrarch's handwriting; and that this gave the suggestion that, in the new handy octavo volumes that the great printer was about to issue, the type should be designed specially, and on the lines of that beautiful penmanship. In that case the work must have been stopped, and eventually it was decided that a greater book should be the first to appear in the new type. However that may be, it is clear that the type made by our artist was highly approved, and Leo X. gave a special letter of privilege to Aldus retaining to him the sole right to its use. The letter did not, however, prevent its being copied, and in many parts of Italy it was speedily forged; and in Lyons books were issued in a similar type bearing the very name and

* "Chi era Francesco da Bologna," by Panizzi. Londra, 1873, 16mo.

mark of Aldus, and intended to deceive the unwary purchaser.

Vasari records yet another occupation when he speaks of a fine set of harness which Francia made for the Duke of Urbino, and which he decorated with a scene of a great forest on fire, with numerous frightened animals rushing out. He praises very highly the beauty and delicacy of the work, and the truth of all the drawing from Nature in the scenes.

It is not perhaps a work of supererogation to mention in this place that the Franco Bolognese named by Dante as a pupil of Oderighi the miniaturist, who was a friend of Giotto, is *not* the same person as Francesco Raibolini called "il Francia," as he lived in Bologna one hundred and fifty years before our artist was born. The mistake has unfortunately been made by a careless writer who did not trouble to verify his dates, and who has built upon the false premiss a whole structure of theory as to Raibolini's early work as a miniaturist. Franco was employed by Boniface VIII., who died in 1294, and he was to a great extent the founder of the Bolognese School, of which in 1500 Raibolini was so great an ornament.

CHAPTER II

EARLY PICTURES

IN Calvi's *Life of Francia* we find stated that he was a pupil of Marco Zoppo, and the same statement is made by Malvasia in his "*Felsina Pittrice*." Morelli, however, shrewdly points out that, although the "assertion that he was a pupil of Zoppo may be read in books, it can nowhere be seen in his works, not even in his niello works, and still less in his paintings, which in technical matters all point to Lorenzo Costa" ("*Italian Masters in German Galleries*," p. 57). Marco Zoppo (1440-1498) was a Bolognese, who was a pupil of Squarcione at Padua, and therefore strongly partakes of the Paduan characteristics. He was above all a classicist, a humanist in his sympathies, so proud of being a pupil of Squarcione as to sign his picture as "Squarcione's Zoppo," and yet so keen in affection towards his native Bologna as to declare himself as "Zoppo da Bologna." Influenced of course he was by Ferrarese work and teaching, but none of the Paduan School ideas did he pass on to Francia, and not a shred of Paduan feeling can be found anywhere in the works of our artist. We may well, therefore, reject the story told by Calvi and Malvasia as the fond imaginings of the Bolognese people, who would fain consider that their favourite master learnt his art from a Bolognese artist,

and derived no influence from any outside sources. Evidence of another kind must also be considered. We have already seen the artist as a goldsmith working hard at the various crafts that he added to his own trade, and we have found him full of commissions. We find no picture of his bearing a date earlier than 1494, and only one with that date, and it is actually not until 1499 that we find him really well at work on pictures, when he was, we may suppose, nearly fifty years old, while we find nothing of Zoppo's work later than 1497. It may, therefore, be readily asked whether this clever man, who was advanced in years when he began to use his brush, derived instruction from the artist who flourished at the time when Raibolini was hard at work as a goldsmith and full of important orders that demanded all his energies and wisdom to execute.

No, it is not to a man whose leading characteristics made no impression upon Francia, and whose teaching does not once appear in the works of his supposed pupil, that we must look for the teaching that made the goldsmith Raibolini into the painter Francia. Local patriotism is in this ascription entirely mistaken, and to quite another man must we look for an answer to our question as to who taught Francia. In 1470 Francesco Cossa had come to Bologna from Ferrara, and had settled down in that city for the rest of his short life. His greatest work is still to be found in that city, and it was there that he did the decoration of the Bentivoglio Palace for that famous patron of art. His manner was severe, dry, but strong and brilliant, and from him, although he died in about 1485, Francia

must have obtained some ideas and influence, as the glow of Cossa's palette and the severity of his style are to be seen in the early works of Francia. It was, however, to Lorenzo Costa that he owed much more, and that not so much in the method of master and pupil as of friend.

It is clear that a great start was given to the art of painting in Bologna when Lorenzo Costa was called there in 1483; but there is no evidence that Francia ever became his pupil, and he was, in fact, too old a man when he commenced painting to be called the pupil of any man. But there is abundant evidence of the very close friendship that existed between the two men, and that from no less an authority than the notebook of Francia himself, which, although not now in existence, was seen by Malvasia in 1841, and quoted by him in his work on the Bolognese painters. Malvasia, although stating the theory that he held as to the influence derived by Francia from Zoppo, cannot but admit the strong friendship that existed between Costa and Francia, and he states that the artists worked in the same building, Francia carrying on his goldsmith's work on the ground-floor, whilst in the floor above Lorenzo Costa was painting his pictures.

On the other hand, several authors place Costa as Francia's pupil; but at the time when we know that Costa was painting in Bologna, Francia was at work with his tools upon his metal work, and the intermediate theory is, I am convinced, the right one, that the two men were influenced one by the other, and as friends rather than as master and pupil or pupil and master. Of the two, Costa had the greater imagination, the

wider knowledge, a larger love of Nature, and more accuracy in drawing; but Francia was by far the grander colourist, the more deeply religious man of the two, and possessed more refinement than did Costa. They were constantly associated in important works, but wherever the two are employed together precedence is invariably given to Francia. It is quite possible that the coming of Costa to Bologna was the cause of Francia's change of craft, and that but for the friendship between the two men Francia would have remained all his life a goldsmith; but Costa was much the younger man of the two, and there is nothing whatever to show either in archives or in work that he became in any sense the master of his older friend. Their work is so much alike in its earlier stages that pictures by the one man have in the past been attributed to the other; but very soon Francia surpassed his friend and produced works that were far finer in conception, colouring, and refinement than Costa could ever have executed.

The affinity between them is to be seen in many ways. The arrangement in altar-pieces of the Madonna seated above an arch which, open to the distance, reveals a fine landscape, is common to both, as can be seen in the altar-piece by Costa in the National Gallery, compared with the one by Francia in San Martino Maggiore in Bologna. The child angels seated at the foot of the throne will be found in each man's work; the adoring angels are very similar; but it is when attention is given to the draperies that the chief resemblance is to be noted. In each case the draperies rather conceal the form than reveal it, and fall about the feet of the wearer

in cumbersome, awkward folds. They are looser in Costa's than in his friend's work, for Francia always, in his early work especially, gave to the draperies a somewhat rigid metallic form, a habit which he derived from his niello-work ; but there are the same lumps of loose folds in the work of each man, and the same useless ends to be seen upon the ground.

For the Church of the Misericordia the two friends united to paint an altar-piece, and the centre panel by Francia and the upper part by Costa still remain in Bologna, while the predella, by Costa, is at Milan. They worked for the same patrons, the wealthy family of the Bentivoglio ; they decorated the same walls both of palace, church, and oratory ; and they both suffered when Bentivoglio was driven out of the city and the beautiful palace became a heap of ruins. Francia remained, but Costa left, when this catastrophe occurred ; and he went back to Ferrara, and thence to Mantua into the service of the Gonzaga family. There he died in 1535, having lived long after his friend, whom he left in Bologna to work for Julius II., when he took up rule over the city that Bentivoglio had so misused.

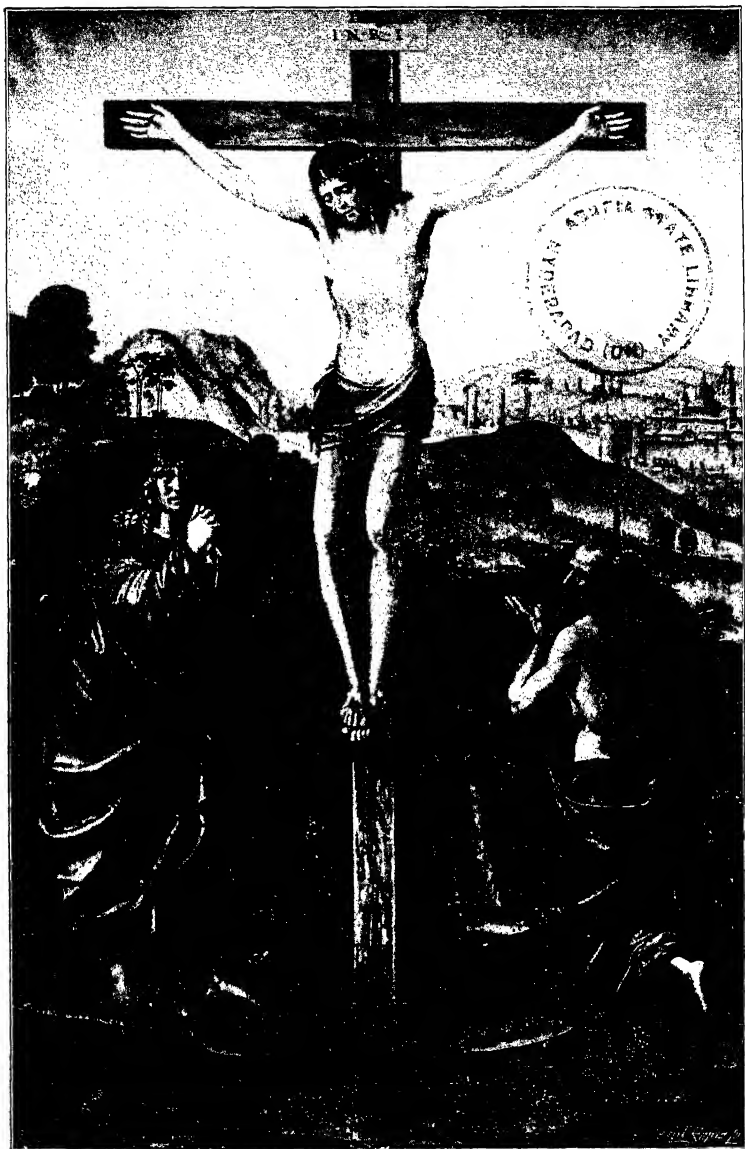
Costa's earliest work in Bologna is the fresco in San Giacomo Maggiore, dated 1488 ; his greatest, the altar-piece in San Giovanni-in-Monte, painted in 1497. The fine work in the National Gallery, which is a very characteristic one, is dated 1505, and was painted for a church in Faenza.

Inasmuch as the paintings that Francia signed bear his name of Francia, not the family name of Raibolini, it may be well to revert to the statement made in the

first chapter, deriving the name from the goldsmith Duc, surnamed Francia, to whom the artist served his apprenticeship. This statement is first made by Zanetti, and is probably the correct explanation of the circumstance,* as the theory held by some writers that the name Francia was but a corruption of the Christian name of the artist Francesco will not hold good in the face of such a signature as "Franciscus Francia," as he signed himself on more than one occasion both on a picture and on a document, and in view of the fact that his death is chronicled as "Francesco Francia" and "Messer Francesco Francia" in the two documents in which it is mentioned. In dealing with his paintings, therefore, he will be styled "Francia" in these pages.

It should be noticed that Francia signed his pictures with the signature "Francia Avrifex," and Fra Leandro Alberti tells us in his "Storia d' Italia" that he signed his metal-work and medals as "Francia Pictor" ("che nell' opere da lui fatte in pittura si scriveva orefice, e nell' opere di metallo pittore"). In the same way Orcagna signed his work in marble as "Andreas Pictor," and his paintings as "Andreas Sculptor," to prove his mastery of the two arts; but we have no signed metal-work remaining of Francia's by which to prove the truth of Alberti's statement, which may, however, be considered as in all probability an accurate one, as it is in accordance with the habit of the time. It is also important to notice that the shape of the letters in which Francia invariably signed his name is almost identical with the shape of the type used in the rare "Hypnerotomachia Poliphili," printed by Aldus Manu-

* "Illustrazione delle Stampe del C. L. Cicognara."



Anderson photo

Archiginnasio Library, Bologna

THE CRUCIFIXION

tius in 1499, an important illustrated book, the designs for which are attributed to no less a person than Giovanni Bellini. In all probability this points to the fact that Francia made the type also for this book for Aldus, and from it derived the shape of the letters in which he signed his name; or, on the other hand, designed the type from the lettering that he was in the habit of using when he signed his name. The theory is one of some interest in any case.

It is impossible to say what is the earliest work of Francia still remaining. His earliest dated work is the "Madonna and Child," with six saints, in the gallery at Bologna (78), which was painted for the Church of the Misericordia; but that picture reveals such a fulness of power, and such mastery over the brush and skill in composition, that it is quite evidently not the first work executed by the master. The difficulty is to believe that it is even an early work, it is so admirable in technique and in colour; but it would appear that the training which Francia had in his niello-work had prepared him so well for the use of the brush that he sprang fully equipped on to the field of action upon which he was to gain so great a victory. Doubtless the love of colour always existed in the heart of the painter, and the use of enamel with niello-work in the same piece of metal proves that he had a great pleasure in using colours that contrasted side by side, while his habit of carefully drawing the figures upon the niello-plate had trained him excellently well in draughtsmanship.

The "St. Stephen" of the Borghese Gallery is usually considered to be one of the artist's earliest works; but

I am disposed to think that the picture at Berlin preceded it, and that "The Crucifixion" at Bologna in the Archiginnasio is even earlier still (Plate X.). The Archiginnasio "Crucifixion," which is in the library, is a picture that very few persons take the trouble to find out; but it is a very interesting one, and, if my surmise is correct, it is the earliest work that we have by the artist. It very closely resembles the niello that has been mentioned, and of which the print is depicted in this book (Plate II.), and was in all probability painted from a sketch done for a similar work in niello. The cross, with its dread burden, is in the midst, and behind is a wild mountainous landscape, in which is to be seen an Oriental city (evidently Jerusalem) with minarets and towers. On the left of the cross stands St. Mary Magdalene with her hands clasped, and on the right kneels St. Jerome; whilst above the cross are the same letters as were to be seen on the niello—the four letters I . N . R . I . The whole work is stiff and angular—the folds of the draperies, especially, are as rigid as iron—but the expression of anguish is very real and intense, and, in so small a picture, there are a surprising number of fine features and a great deal of detail that clearly show the artist to have been accustomed to a small surface, and to elaborate, delicate work. I take this to have been the starting-point—a picture painted from a niello sketch in a niello manner, but with rich colouring and deep sympathy, done by a man who was full of devotion, but hampered by his accustomed handicraft, and who is striving to emancipate himself from the methods of one craft in adopting another, and who only *very* slightly succeeds in his effort.



Hausstätigl photo

MADONNA AND CHILD

Berlin Gallery

Perhaps another "Crucifixion," which is now in the gallery at Bologna, is his next work. It is similar to the last, but there are more figures in it, and for Jerusalem there is substituted a typical Italian village with its church. The Virgin, St. John, and St. Francis are now brought on to the scene, as well as the two saints seen in the last-named work; but the conception is on a very different scale, as this new work (373) is a big one. There is still to be seen the same tight treatment that bespeaks the goldsmith, and the same reticence of composition. The Berlin "Madonna" (125) (Plate XI.) is a small one, and may on that account have preceded the one just named. It is evidently quite an early work, but is of special interest, as it has the foreshadowing of much that was to follow. The draperies are hard and angular; the hair, both of St. Joseph and the Divine Child, is like chased metal; the trees in the landscape stand out rigid, definite, carved objects; and the smaller details, as the eyes and finger-nails, are painted as though they were in enamel; but the face of the Madonna is most sweet and lovely, and her hand is of that delicate, knuckleless texture, with long, pointed fingers, so characteristic of the master in his later days.

It has another point of interest, as it possesses one of those inscriptions that Francia was so fond of putting upon his pictures, and which now add so much to their importance. In this case we have a reference to a great friend and patron—one Bartolommeo Bianchini, a senator of Bologna of some eminence, who was also a writer in his way, and wrote some pleasing lines as to the genius of the artists of his native city, especially

Francia, and to whom were dedicated by Portuguese some epigrams, in one of which is a reference to Francia.

Francia painted Bianchini's portrait, but his work as a portrait-painter requires separate consideration, and must be treated of in a later chapter. The inscription on the Berlin picture may be thus translated: "Here, painted by thy hands, O Francia, at the expense of Bartolommeo Bianchini, dwells the greatest of Mothers." Lord Wemyss has a picture which very closely resembles this one.

The "St. Stephen" at the Borghese (Plate XII.) still shows the goldsmith work. It is a highly finished picture, full of fine, hard detail, almost polished in its hardness, and with the strange absence of atmosphere, and consequently of shadow, that characterizes this early work. In it, however, the artist is found to be gaining his knowledge of colour, as the picture is a treasure-house of rich, glowing tints, and, with all its harsh and somewhat niggling detail, is thoughtful, inspiring, and beautiful.

I think that the saint in the Poldi-Pezzoli Gallery belongs to the same period, although I am not prepared to say definitely who the saint is. It has been called St. Anthony of Padua and St. Francis, and may be either, although I am disposed to think from the absence of the stigmata that it is St. Anthony. It is a pleasant, quiet work, but not a notable one, and the head of "God Almighty" in the Ambrosiana close by is a more important picture. Here, again, is to be seen all the love of detail: the beard long and flowing, the embroidery on the sleeve, the binding of the book and its decoration—all drawn in the niello fashion; the



Alinari photo

Borghese Gallery, Rome

ST. STEPHEN THE MARTYR

artist has not yet been able to relinquish the habits of the goldsmith, and works as if with a burin or tool in his hand rather than a brush. In this work, however, and in the *Pietà* at Bologna (83), which also is early, and which was done for the Church of the Misericordia, there is to be seen an increasing excellence both of beauty and of technique, and the absence of shadows that is distinctive of the niello style of painting is to be less and less remarked. Certain notable features begin also to appear, such as the long hand with its very slight appearance of knuckles, the hollow, open sleeves, and, above all, the curious upward gaze of the faces, with a specially clear appearance of the whites of the eyes which is so striking a characteristic of Francia's work.

The few portraits that Vasari names as the first works of the master have disappeared, or cannot now be identified; but they were very possibly of small account, and done at the very beginning of the artist's career as trials. He "entertained," says Vasari, "many masters of the art in his house many months, to the end that they might teach him the method and processes of colouring, and in this way very rapidly acquired the requisite practice." He *may* certainly have become acquainted with Mantegna about 1472, and Layard seems to think that the influence of Ercole di Roberti Grandi is to be seen in the work of Francia; but it is not very clear, and the effect of any acquaintance with the far greater man Mantegna is hardly to be noticed in any work done by Francia.

It is quite inconceivable, as has already been said, that the picture dated 1494, which Vasari states was

the first work that he executed, could have been so, as it is one of such profound importance, marked by such skill in composition, such grand colouring, and such admirable technique, that although Francia took a high position immediately he began to paint, yet he must have done many early works ere he could by any possibility have produced so fine a picture as this (Plate XIII.). It was painted for Messer Bartolommeo Felicini, a wealthy citizen of Bologna, who had founded a chapel in the Church of the Misericordia outside the city walls, and who now desired to decorate the high altar in the same church in recognition of special mercies bestowed upon him in a recent serious illness.

Much of Francia's work was done for this famous church, which in his time was at the zenith of its fame, and attracted many gifts on account of the great benefits that were received in answer to prayer at its altars. Messer Francesco also presented a jewel to the church, which the records say was set by Francia; and so beautiful was it esteemed to be, that by the desire of the Chapter it was depicted in the picture, and can be seen hanging over the head of the Madonna.

In this picture we see the pyramidal form of the grouping introduced which marks Francia's work, the Madonna and Child occupying the apex of the pyramid, and the six saints—St. Augustine, St. Monica, and St. John the Baptist on the right, and St. Francis, St. Proculus, and St. Sebastian on the left—forming the sides of the group. The donor of the picture is to be seen kneeling in the foreground, offering up to God his grateful thanks for his deliverance. The St. Proculus who appears in this picture must not be confused with



Alinari photo

THE "FELICINI" ALTAR-PIECE, 1494

Bologna Gallery

another saint of the same name, who also appears in Bolognese pictures, and who was a Bishop of the city about 445, and was murdered by Totila, King of the Goths. The St. Proculus who is here presented is San Proculo *Soldato*, a military protector of Bologna, who killed Marinus the Roman centurion, who in the tenth century was the persecutor of the Christians. This 1494 altar-piece is signed by Francia in the following manner—OPVS . FRANCIAE . AVRIFICIS, and is dated. The date has been misread upon more than one occasion, and therefore appears erroneously in several books, on account of the final four figures IIII having been overlooked. The error began with Vasari, and has often been repeated since; but a careful examination of the picture will show that the four strokes are still quite visible.

For the next year we have but one dated work, and that is now at Pressburg in the collection of Count Jean Palffy, who acquired it at the Dudley sale (Lot 62) in 1892. It was mentioned by Waagen, and exhibited in Manchester, and represents the Madonna and Child with St. Joseph. This again was a commissioned work, and is inscribed JACOBVS . GAMBARVS . BONON . PER . FRANCIAM . AVRIFABRVM . HOC . OPVS . FIERI . CURAVIT and dated 1495. It is said to have been originally in the Church of San Giovanni-in-Monte in Bologna, and the story is that Gambaro was also a goldsmith, and stood godfather with Francia to the child of a mutual friend, and that this picture was the gift of the two god-parents (one doing the work and the other paying the cost) for the family chapel of the parents of the child.

The interesting puzzle as to the pictures of this period,

starting from the 1494 one, is the question of Umbrian influence to be found in them. The question is somewhat lightly dismissed by Layard and other more recent writers, but is not quite so easy a matter to deal with as might at first be thought. Certainly Costa's influence is the main feature of Francia's work, especially in the architectural backgrounds, the columns, the decorative bases, the seated child angels, the draperies, the tablets with inscriptions, and the architectural decorated thrones, all of which are Ferrarese in their feeling; but the mere statement of these facts does not clear the entire ground.

Whence comes the Umbrian characteristic landscape, with its two classes of trees—the fine delicate kind silhouetted against the sky, and the thick lumpy ones that stand nearer, and more important still, whence come the figures such as that of St. Sebastian in the 1494 and 1499 altar-pieces, which look almost as if they were taken directly out of the pictures of Perugino? From whom is derived, if not from an Umbrian, that quaint upward turn of the eyes that so curiously reveals the white? It is, of course, easy to say that Costa was as Umbrian as was an Umbrian, or, rather, that the manner of Costa was on the same lines as were the manner and habit of the Umbrians; but while that is so the difficulty is only stated.

There is no need to force the point or to state that Francia fell under strong Umbrian influence; but I feel convinced that some of the features of his pictures were not derived from Costa, and are not fully Ferrarese, although having affinities with that school; and without going any further, I contend that the pictures by

Perugino which at this time were coming to Bologna, such as the "Virgin in Glory," done for the very church in which Francia was working, San Giovanni-in-Monte, and delivered in the church in 1497, as well as the picture still in San Martino Maggiore, which is, I am convinced, a genuine work by Perugino, and not the work of one of his pupils, must inevitably have had an influence upon the man who, though old in years, was as a painter at the beginning of his career. Of course he would go and see them, and of course he would admire them, and believe in the old man who had taught Raphael, and who was then considered as one of the great painters of the age. Perugino was at this time in the very zenith of his reputation. He had recently been in Venice; he had, it is clear, visited Bologna on his way to Florence, as the instructions for the San Giovanni-in-Monte altar-piece were taken by him personally in the church, as the documents prove; and he was having large commissions in all directions for his work, which was so greatly appreciated just then.

It is just at this very time, when we know the artist had been in Bologna, that we see the special features which are called Umbrian appear in the works of Francia. What more likely than that the two artists met and discussed questions of interest to each other? Even if they did not meet, can we not conceive of the interest that Francia would take in the personality and pictures of the great Umbrian? And it seems hardly possible that, when in the city, he on his part should not have met—especially as Bologna at that time was not a large place—the painter-goldsmith whose praise was in every-

body's ears, and who was considered one of the most important personages in the city.

Morelli proclaims as a certain fact that Francia "derived nothing from Perugino," and that his work shows no signs whatever of Perugino's influence, and that the two men did not influence one another at all; but Morelli did not know that Perugino had ever been in Bologna, or especially that he was in the city for some days at the very time in which the so-called Umbrian features appear most fully in Francia's work. Had he known this, it is possible that his statement might have been less dogmatic; but I do not think that any observer, placing illustrations of the work at this time of the two men side by side, can fail to observe that the Perugino influence is to be seen. The same dreamy abstraction, the same slight attachment of one figure to another, the same contemplation and sense of being self-centred, the same devotion, adoration, and calm, quiet thoughtfulness, are to be found in each of their works; but Francia had the finer spirit and was the richer colourist, and he was able to avoid the fantastic head-dresses and sham classicism that were snares to the other man. Grafting the Umbrian teaching and the Umbrian feeling for dreamy beauty upon the stronger stem of Ferrarese work, he was able to produce pictures which were far beyond the power of Perugino, and which in their way are finer than that master could have ever attained to.

His pictures are flatter than Umbrian works were; they do not possess the space composition noteworthy in that school. Even when a landscape is introduced the scene is not a part of the landscape, but the landscape

is an accessory to the picture, and we do not look out in the picture as at an open window into the buoyant spaciousness of the country, nor is the eye carried on from distance to yet greater distance, as it is when an Umbrian picture is seen. In the San Martino Maggiore picture the landscape, so thoroughly Costa-like in its character, is lovely, and is far-reaching; but it has its limits, it is not limitless: and it only forms an interesting part of the picture, but does not arise out of it, as it would have done had the picture come from the other school.

Fortunately, in the Bologna gallery the picture by Perugino hangs in the next room to the Francia room, and comparison of the two artists is rendered easy.

One feature Francia never lost, and that was the love of fine ornament which was a part of his training as a goldsmith, and which, clearly to be seen at this time, was present all the rest of his life. Look at the details upon the cope of St. Augustine, upon the border around the dress of the Virgin, upon the clasps of the book, upon the chain that the donor wears, upon the staff carried by the Bishop, upon the jewel over the head of the Madonna, and upon the decoration on the step of the throne, and it will be seen that all these show the love for jewellery and rich delicate ornament that the artist had, and his insistence upon the care needed to show all this ornament in a worthy way. The painter was always a goldsmith, and always a lover of jewels. He delighted in ornament and painted it lovingly and well.

CHAPTER III

THE GREAT ALTAR-PIECES

THE ruling power in these early days of Francia's work was his patron Giovanni Bentivoglio. The family had secured the dominion in Bologna about 1440, but Annibale Bentivoglio, who was then chief magistrate, was treacherously killed in 1445. In 1462, however, through the help of Cosimo de' Medici, his father's death was avenged by the son Giovanni, who was chosen chief of the Senate in his stead, and who very soon by his own energies, strength, and popularity, changed this elective position into a complete dictatorship, and eventually ruled Bologna as if from a throne. In 1488 a serious revolt occurred against his dominion on the part of the Melvezzi family, who claimed to have more right to supreme dominion than Bentivoglio; but Giovanni soon quelled this disturbance, killed many of the conspirators, and drove away the remainder, and then for upwards of forty years, without serious interruption, reigned in the city.

His government was a stern one and severe, but he kept the State free from invasion, and in a condition of peace, and therefore under his care it prospered. His own interests were in the direction of art, learning, and science, and he wisely tried his utmost to encourage the artists of the place; to attract the greatest scholars



Anderson photo

San Giacomo Maggiore, Bologna

THE "BENTIVOGLIO" ALTAR-PIECE, 1499

PLATE XIV

to the city, and to do all that was in his power to make Bologna beautiful, attractive, and of great renown.

The University prospered, and became known all over Europe for its learning and the skill of its professors. The printers became famous, and their books were sought for far and near, and other printers came to Bologna for type and for education in the new art.

Bentivoglio spared no money to make the city beautiful; he gave great and important commissions to artists and sculptors to decorate his palace with their finest work, he gave books and manuscripts to the library, he ordered important volumes from the printers, and helped them by gifts and encouragement to produce finer works than had hitherto been seen; by his help the great edition of the Pentateuch was issued in 1482 in Hebrew, one of the first important books to be printed in that character.

In every way that he could Bentivoglio embellished his city, giving liberal emolument to all who could aid him, and attracting to him by every means in his power the artists, workers in metal, stone, marble, or jewellery, of whom he heard in the neighbouring States. He it was who commissioned from Perugino the altar-pieces for the Church of San Giovanni-in-Monte, and now, finding that in his very city he had ready to hand one who was the equal, if not the superior, of the great Umbrian, he gave him the commission to paint for his own chapel in the great church of San Giacomo Maggiore the altar-piece dated 1499, which is still one of the chief ornaments of that building.

In this noteworthy picture, perhaps the finest that the artist ever painted (Plate XIV.), there is to be

seen a great advance over the works that had preceded it. Doubtless Francia strained his utmost to please the important patron who had commissioned it, and whose satisfaction could make his reputation and insure for him many other commissions. Instructions from the chief of the State meant very much to the artist, and it can readily be believed with what anxiety he would work at this great altar-piece, and with what intense desire he would plan out all its features and decide upon its scheme of colour. There was a further necessity laid upon him in this picture which taxed all his powers, and that was the wish of Giovanni Bentivoglio that two of his children should be introduced into the picture, and that the artist should paint their portraits in the two angels who appear in the upper part of the composition on either side of the Madonna. In every way Francia acquitted himself well, and Vasari tells us that so pleased was Bentivoglio with the work, that he gave him over and above the promised payment "a very handsome and most honourable gift."

He certainly ought to have done so, for the picture is a masterpiece, conceived in the most admirable manner, and painted with a full brush of rich and melodious colour. The background is very Ferrarese in its architectural character, but the draperies partake less of the Costa feeling in their folds than is the case in other pictures painted later. The figures of St. Sebastian and his companion on the opposite side of the picture are Umbrian, however, in their conception, and Francia never painted a finer figure than the one of St. Sebastian, which was so highly esteemed by later artists as

to be often copied into their works. Who the opposite saint is cannot be stated with absolute certainty, as he is not named in the contract for painting the picture; but I cannot accept either the attribution given in Murray, who calls it "St. Fabiano," a saint with whom I am not acquainted, or with Layard, who calls it "St. Florian." Why the Austrian saint, who so very seldom appears in Italian pictures at all, should be introduced this once only by Francia, I cannot conceive, nor can I find any evidence to connect this figure with St. Florian, save the fact that he is depicted in armour. I believe him to be the Bolognese saint San Proculo Soldato, who so often appeared in the Bolognese pictures, and who, like St. Florian and St. George, was represented in full armour. The two angels at the feet of the Virgin have been described as the two that are portraits of the children of Bentivoglio; but, as the contract for the work speaks of the children being at the side of "Our Lady," it is clear that the two upper figures are intended. The face of the Madonna is not quite so sweet as Francia was able to make it in his later works; but it has all the quiet placidity, downcast eyes, and earnest thought that are to be found in every representation of the Madonna that he painted.

This great picture bears the name of Bentivoglio, who ordered it, and of the artist who painted it—IL . FRANCIA . PINXIT—and has been in the same chapel, for which it was originally painted, from the very first up to now. Vasari tells us that its success was so great that it obtained for the artist two other commissions immediately.

One of these was from the son of the ruler, Mon-

signore de' Bentivogli, who was Archdeacon of Bologna, and Papal Protonotary, and who ordered for the Church of the Misericordia an altar-piece which was to be done jointly by the two friends Francia and Costa. The subject of the centre, which Francia was to do, was "The Nativity"; this is now in the Bologna Gallery (81). The lunette by Costa, representing "The Annunciation," is still in the church, but is so high as to be difficult to see; and the predella, which also was by Costa, and represents "The Adoration of the Magi," and is dated 1499, is in the Brera Gallery. With a view, I suppose, to subordinating his colouring to that of Costa in order to produce a pleasant harmony throughout, Francia worked in this altar-piece (Plate XV.) in a much colder scheme of colouring than was his custom, and this coldness has been intensified by the *rifacimento* which the picture has undergone since it was painted. This produces upon the mind of the spectator quite a different impression from that produced by the other works of the artist, and his reduction of the value of his colour scheme lost him much of the power to produce emotion that he generally possessed. The composition is certainly beautiful, and the silent, adoring saints are finely drawn and well grouped, while the distant landscape is more detailed and varied than has been the custom in earlier works, and produces a greater sense of distance to the vision. The bushy trees all in a row, and the square-built towers and houses which stand out so clearly, are very different from Umbrian landscapes, where they are always bathed in a golden haze, which only half reveals the distant beauties of the hills, and the



Alinari photo

Bologna Gallery

THE "BENTIVOGLIO" ADORATION, 1499

trees but faintly stand out silhouetted against the sky.

Francia never possessed the Umbrian power to depict landscape, because he lived in the Æmilia rather than in Umbria. As the scenes in which he passed his life differed from those of Umbria, so did his treatment of them. Yet the Perugino influence is to be marked in the separate figures and in the grouping, while his own special power of delineating details of ornament is to be noticed in the cope of the Bishop, the chain around the neck of the angel, the rosary and cap of the Archdeacon, the laurel wreath and the birds in the foreground; and the ungainly Costa-like draperies must not be overlooked.

Antonio Galeazzo Bentivoglio had but lately returned from the Holy Land, and is therefore represented as a pilgrim with the Red Cross upon his habit and his cap, kneeling in humble adoration, while, with his hands upon his breast, he cries, "Dominus non sum dignus," with the accustomed gesture. Opposite to him stands Girolamo Pandolfi di Casio, who also went to the Holy Land, and whom Calvi tells us was a great friend of Francia's. He was a goldsmith, and was in addition to that a poet, upon whom Leo X. by a brief of May 11, 1513, bestowed the laurel wreath which had been given him already by universal acclamation, and which Francia binds around his brows in this picture. Girolamo di Casio wrote a sonnet respecting this very picture, and in other poetical works praised the skill of his friend Francia, and extolled the country that had given birth to so great a genius. He outlived his friend, and wrote his epitaph. Vasari

praises the portrait of the donor in this picture, and states that, "according to those who know him, it is an excellent likeness"; but he does not refer to a tradition that can be traced back some seventy years, that the face of the St. Francis in the picture depicts the artist himself. It is, of course, possible that this may be so, as the artists of that day were in the habit of introducing their own portraits into their works; but as no mention of such a resemblance is to be found in Vasari, who would have been likely to have heard the story if it was in existence in his time, and as it is not found as a tradition till the beginning of the nineteenth century, it may be deemed one of those accretions that have grown on to the description of the picture, and which has no more than local gossip to justify its existence.

One interesting feature appears in this work which is, as far as I know, unique in the pictures of Francia, and that is the presence of a fine filmy gauze veil around the neck of the Madonna. It is beautifully painted, and hangs in transparent folds; but in no other representation of the Madonna is a similar veil to be seen, although it is quite possible that it existed in the "Annunciation" in the Brera but has been removed in the cleaning to which this picture has been subjected. Calvi states that on this picture are the following words, painted in gold letters: PICTORVM . CVRA . OPVS . MENSIBVS . DVOBVS . CONSVMATVM; but no trace of them is to be seen at the present time, although it is quite possible that in Calvi's time (1812) they may have been visible, and the inscription is very interesting as affording an idea of how quickly the master worked.

It was for this same Church that Francia painted



the puzzling little predella (Plate XVI.) which is now in the gallery at Bologna (82), and which in so many ways differs from his usual work. It is a representation of the Birth and the Death of Christ, of which the former half is of the customary type, albeit somewhat rougher than usual in execution; in this the Madonna is bending before the Divine Child, who is upon the ground and attended by angels and shepherds; but the latter half of the picture resembles nothing else that we have from the hand of the master. In it we have a somewhat mystic rendering of the scene, as St. Augustine, vested in a cope, stands in the midst, having his hands outspread towards, on the right, the Madonna and Child, with St. John seated, a scene in which both the Saviour and Forerunner are represented as young children; and on the left, the Christ crucified upon the cross at full age. There are three inscriptions to be found in this picture. Above the right hand of the saint are the words, on a scroll, HIC . AB . VBERE . LACTOR, above the left hand the words HIC . A . VVLNERE . PASCOR, and above the head of St. Augustine a double scroll with the words POSITVS . IN . MEDIO . QVO . ME . VERTAR . NESICIO . DICĀ . ERGO . IESV . MARIA . MISERERE. The landscape closely resembles the scene described in the last picture. There are the same rows of thick bushy trees, the same winding river, rocky foreground, distant hills, whilst in the distance is the city of Bologna, and on the right yet another city is to be seen.

The jewelled work on the cope bespeaks the master goldsmith, and the same may be said of the mitre and pastoral staff which are upon the ground in the front of the picture; but the idea of mystical teaching by means

of scrolls with words which come from the lips of the Bishop is one which is new to Francia, and which he does not use in any other work. For which of his Misericordia pictures this predella was intended was not very clear, as it is too long in size for the Manzuoli picture, and too short for the Bentivoglio one. I think, however, that some investigations I have made in Bologna will throw light upon the history of this curious work.

It appears that in 1499 there was a serious fire in the Palazzo Gozzadini, and that the head of the family, with his wife and three children, narrowly escaped death, having been rescued from the burning house by a monk. The fire seems to have attracted some considerable attention at the time by reason, I take it, of the narrow escape of the family, who were at that time of importance in the place, and also, as far as I can discover, from the fact that many persons perished in the destruction of the house. The event is mentioned more than once in the local records.

In the list of Francia's works, which I found in the Archiginnasio, is included a votive picture for the altar of the Gozzadini Chapel in the Church of the Misericordia, and on measuring this altar I find that it coincides in size with this predella picture. The important point with reference to my attribution is that in the city depicted in the rear of the picture is clearly represented a large house on fire, and I am therefore convinced that in this predella we have a part of an altar-piece commissioned by the family for their own chapel in the popular church, in which the artist was desired to commemorate their escape from



Alinari photo

Bologna Gallery

THE "MANZUOLI" ALTAR-PIECE

death in a prominent manner. It is possible that the person who ordered the picture himself suggested, as was the custom in those days, the subject of it, and that in this way the unusual characteristics of this very interesting work are accounted for. I believe this explanation will be found to give the name, date, and history of this predella.

The "Christ Dead" for this same church has already been noticed (p. 37), but there remains yet another picture done for the same building that has not been alluded to. This is a very important work (Plate XVII.), named by Vasari, who says that it was painted at the request of a lady of the Manzuoli family, and that in it "he depicted Our Lady with the Child in her arms, San Giorgio, San Giovanni Batista, San Stefano, and Sant' Agostino, with an angel beneath: the hands of the last-mentioned are folded in an attitude of so much grace that he seems indeed to belong to Paradise." The description is a very good one, and the spectator will be in full accord with the words of the old historian as to the angel, for seldom did Francia paint a more lovely child.

In many ways the whole work is a masterpiece, and this is especially noticeable when examination is made of the detail that the artist so loved. The dalmatic worn by St. Stephen is of rare beauty, most exquisite in its design of large roses and leaves, whilst the sleeves and lower part are adorned with the very richest of decoration. The cope worn by St. Augustine is of the same set of vestments, similar in pattern, but richer, as would beseem the greater dignity of the vestment; and this resemblance in these two vestments

leads me to believe that the picture was painted from the vestments which the church records relate were presented by the donor of the picture, and which Francia, perhaps, designed for her, but which are not now, alas! in the vestry or sacristy of the church.* Mark also the beauty of the chain armour of St. George, the border of the dress of the Madonna, the hem of the angel's raiment, and all the lavish display of decoration that will be found upon the throne and the columns in the background.

It is important to notice that the drawing of horses upon the lowest step of the throne is identical with similar work on the medal designed some few years afterwards for Pope Julius II. The draperies are still crumpled, and lie upon the ground, in the customary Costa-like style, the grouping is as usual pyramidal; but the execution, colouring, and finish of the work are superb, and show the great success that had attended Francia's progress in the field of painting.

A fine effect of shot yellow and green is to be noticed in the angel's dress, and the same combination of colourings, although not shot together, in the vestments, admirably contrasted with the green marble on which two of the saints stand. With respect to the Madonna, who in this picture is exactly the same as in the Mansi picture at Lucca, one curious feature of the artist's work may be noted.

* Part of a vestment very much faded in colour, which formed a portion of the spoils taken from Italy by Napoleon, is now in the Louvre, and is, I believe, a part of the very vestment from which this picture was painted; but I have not been able to examine it sufficiently closely to be able to arrive at a definitive opinion, or to discover any documents that would prove from which town in Italy it was brought.

Francia very seldom drew the human ear. He generally covered it up in some way, either with hair and a band or with part of the head-dress. In the Bentivoglio altar-piece, in which there are eight persons depicted, there are but three ears to be seen. In the altar-piece with six saints, in which, including the donor, Felicini, there are ten persons to be seen, there are but two ears to be clearly perceived, those of the Christ and St. Francis, whilst the ear of St. John Baptist can just be discerned under his hair, peeping out, and the ear of St. Augustine is very nearly covered up by his staff.

The value of this curious fact will be more clearly seen when we come to examine the portraits painted by Francia, but it should be kept in mind as affording a mark of the work of this artist. In this Manzuoli picture there are seven persons depicted, and on four of them is to be seen one ear apiece—the Divine Child, St. Stephen, St. John, and the Bishop, but in the latter it is nearly hidden by the mitre. In the Madonna it is never to be seen, and the same almost may be said as regards the angels that Francia paints; and further, when the ear is painted, it is always the same ear, with one single crumpled volute, of which the inner part slightly protrudes.

In 1500 Francia painted an "Annunciation" for the Church of the Annunziata, outside, as Vasari tells us at that time, the gate of San Mammolo, and which, he states, "is esteemed to be very well executed." It is probable that a little earlier than that he executed for the same church the enthroned Virgin and Child which so closely resembles in its general arrange-

ment the last-named picture. It is a very simple composition, as there are but two saints in it, one on either side of the Madonna, and below, at the foot of the throne, kneels a little St. John the Baptist, who carries his cross of wood with the banner of ECCE . AGNVS . DEI (Plate XVIII.). The landscape is more Umbrian than in any of Francia's works, but has the presence of those bushy trees in a row which never appear in the works of Perugino, but which mark the Bolognese School. The throne is elaborately decorated with floral designs and musical instruments, and bears upon it a long inscription describing the devotion of the donor Joannes Scappus towards the Virgin and St. Paul, and his gift of this picture in memory of his son Lactantius, on the occasion of his untimely death, and in loving memory of him.

Grasped in the hand of St. Paul in the picture is to be seen a gold vase, closely resembling one yet to be seen in the Sacristy of St. Petronius in Bologna.

The marks of the stigmata are to be clearly seen upon the hands of the St. Francis, and they are also equally well to be seen in the similar figure in the Felicini altar-piece; but they do not appear on the hands of the figure called St. Francis in the Archdeacon's picture (Plate XV.), which has also been styled a portrait of the artist, and it is therefore quite unlikely that this figure in the Archdeacon's altar-piece does represent St. Francis, or even a saint at all.

My own impression is that this person, who is not shaven or tonsured, and has no attribute of a saint, and whose dress is more of a secular robe than a habit, is either Giovanni Filoteo Achillini, the poet, or his more



Anderson photo

THE "SCAPPI" ALTAR-PIECE

Bologna Gallery

celebrated brother Alessandro Achillini, as both of them were great friends of the Archdeacon and in high favour at the Bentivoglio Court; and of one of them, if not of both, there is evidence in the Bolognese papers that Francia painted a portrait. Giovanni Achillini wrote a great deal in favour of Francia, and was writing at the very time that this picture was being painted. He was also the special friend of Di Casio, although the opponent of the same man in the public favour, which veered from time to time first to one poet and then to another.

One of Achillini's poems which refers to Francia, and is taken out of the volume called "*Viridario*" (p. 187), will be found in Calvi. The other brother, Alessandro, was a physician, and at that moment was specially noteworthy, as he had been called in to see Giovanni Bentivoglio, and had cured him from a troublesome boil that had worried him. He was a Professor of the University, a celebrated humanist, and one of the first persons to conduct dissection upon the human body in that city. He died in 1512, and I have a very strong impression that the portrait in this altar-piece, called in the gallery "*Francia*," or "*St. Francis*," represents one of these two brothers, probably the latter, as the two rival poets would be less likely to be introduced into the same picture.

We now come, after this lengthy parenthesis, to "*The Annunciation*" just mentioned, the first of three representations of the mystical scene, and the earliest in point of the date of the three, if my suggested chronology is correct. Of the date of this one, 1500, there is no doubt, as it appears on the picture (Plate XIX.),

and I think that in the two succeeding representations of the same scene the artist became more and more simple in rendering the subject, the picture done for the Oratory of St. Jerome having two saints in attendance upon the Virgin, whereas the one at Milan represents the angel and Virgin alone.

In this first one the composition is crowded, but the effect is very lovely. The angel is represented in the act of flying down with the message to the Madonna, who is standing (not kneeling, as some authority has said) with her hands folded and her head bowed while she receives the gracious message. In the sky, within an iridescent oval, is a representation of the Divine Child as an infant holding a cross of wood, and above is the Father, and below the feet of the child is the Holy Dove. The expression of the Madonna is that sweet, placid, and thoughtful one that is so noticeable in Francia's works in their best period, and there is neither snood, veil nor other head-dress as would befit the youthful maiden who was about to receive so great a mission. Grouped around the Virgin are four saints, grand figures, two of whom nearest to her are gazing up at the Queen of Heaven in rapt adoration, full of the sublimity of the occasion in which they are allowed to take part; for Francia, like many another Italian artist, conceived, as has been fittingly said by George Eliot in "Adam Bede," "these supreme events as mysteries at which the successive ages were spectators, and in relation to which the great souls of all periods became, as it were, contemporaries."

On the left is to be seen St. John the Divine writing his Gospel, and next to him St. Francis of Assisi. On



Alinari photo

Bologna Gallery

THE "FRANCISCAN" ANNUNCIATION, 1500

the other side stands a warrior saint, perhaps St. George or San Proculo Soldato, probably St. George; but why his long staff is represented broken at the top, contrary to the usual custom, I cannot tell; and next to him is St. Bernardino of Siena. This last saint, the finest in pose and drawing of the four, was well known in Bologna, and the effect of his visit to the city had not even then passed away. As the church was a Franciscan one, it was fitting also that St. Francis and St. Bernard should appear in it, and below can be seen, in a scroll carried by a lizard, the two arms crossed, over a wooden cross, that were used as the effigy of the Order at that time. St. Bernard has in his hands an open book, in which appear the words from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Philippians (ii. 10): "In nomine Iesu omne genu flectatur cælestium terrestrium et infernorum et omnis lingua confiteatur quia Dominus Iesus Christus in gloria est Dei Patris." He is represented, as usual, without a beard, and wearing the habit of his Order, and is anxiously looking up at the Madonna, and pointing to the words in his book, which were always the keynote of his teaching, and therefore associated with him.

This picture is, as already stated, signed with the name of the artist and the date of its execution.

In examining it, attention should also be given to the birds that are depicted upon the branches near St. John, as birds, generally goldfinches, are a characteristic of Francia's work, and are always beautifully painted with the utmost loving care. In this picture there are two lovely ones, and they also appear in the Manzuoli and Bentivoglio altar-pieces. The plants at the foot of

the picture are delightfully represented, and evidently done by one who loved them; but it is possible that the drapery of the armed figure has been done by a pupil, as in its technique it is not equal to the rest of the picture.

It was in all probability at this time that two missing pictures were painted which were in Paris in 1873, but which have since then been unaccountably lost to sight.

One was the Guastavillani altar-piece, which was once in the collection of Cardinal Fesch, and which is grouped in the same pyramidal manner as the pictures that have been lately considered. The four saints are St. Francis, St. John the Baptist, St. George, and St. Sebastian, and the latter figure is from the same model as the St. Sebastian in the Felicini altar-piece. There is a long inscription also upon this picture (see List of Pictures, p. 155), and in every way, in grouping, colour, and detail, it belongs to this period. The other picture I have only been able to judge of from description, as it was not reproduced in the private illustrated catalogue of the 1873 exhibition in Rue Leroux, as was the Guastavillani work; but it has a special interest of its own. M. Charles Blanc, who described both pictures in the *Gazette des Beaux Arts* for September 1, 1863, stated that the button on the cap of St. Sixtus, who, with St. Laurence, is represented in the picture, is either a medal of Francia's or a niello by the same artist; and this is a feature which is of such striking importance that I am exceedingly sorry not to have been able to trace the present owner of this very important work. It was originally in the Northwick Gallery, and is described in the catalogue of the sale of that famous collection.



Braun photo

Hermitage Gallery, St. Petersburg

THE "CALCINA" ALTAR-PIECE, 1500

Another important work was, as proved by the date upon it, done at this period of 1500. This is the picture in the Hermitage Gallery (Plate XX.), which was painted originally for Ludovico de Calcina, Canon of the Church of San Petronio, and erected in that church in the same year. It was afterwards removed by the Calcina family into their own chapel in the Church of San Lorenzo delle Grotte, which had been rebuilt by the family, and for which the picture was really intended; but on the demolition of this building it was carried to Rome by Cardinal Ludovisi, from whom it passed back again to Bologna by heritage to the family of the Ercolani, and then in 1843 was bought for the Hermitage Gallery. In this the Virgin is enthroned, as usual, upon a highly decorated throne, and is seated in the midst of a landscape and under an arch. St. Laurence (with reference to the name of the church) and St. Jerome stand one on either side of the Madonna, and at the foot of the throne are seated two child angels playing upon musical instruments, their fair, long curly hair flowing about their faces, and bound only by a fillet across the forehead. There are no birds in this picture, and there is not quite so much detail, but some strong, bold brush-work. The landscape is delicately sketched in, and is marked by the invariable bushy trees, and characterized by the somewhat hard outline and curious absence of atmosphere that is notable in Francia's early pictures.

The next dated picture that we possess is the one at Berlin (Plate XXI.), dated 1502, which in its peculiar arrangement foreshadowed the much later picture in the Church of San Frediano at Lucca; it will there-

fore be considered when that work comes under review, although, in point of chronology, it belongs to this period. But, excluding this work for a while, there are a great many pictures that fall into position between 1500 and 1505, when the *Madonna del Terremoto* was painted. The braided treatment of the hair of the Madonna is one mannerism by which this period will be recognised, as later on a distinctive religious head-dress is adopted invariably for the Virgin, which is equally a marked characteristic of the work of the artist's full maturity.

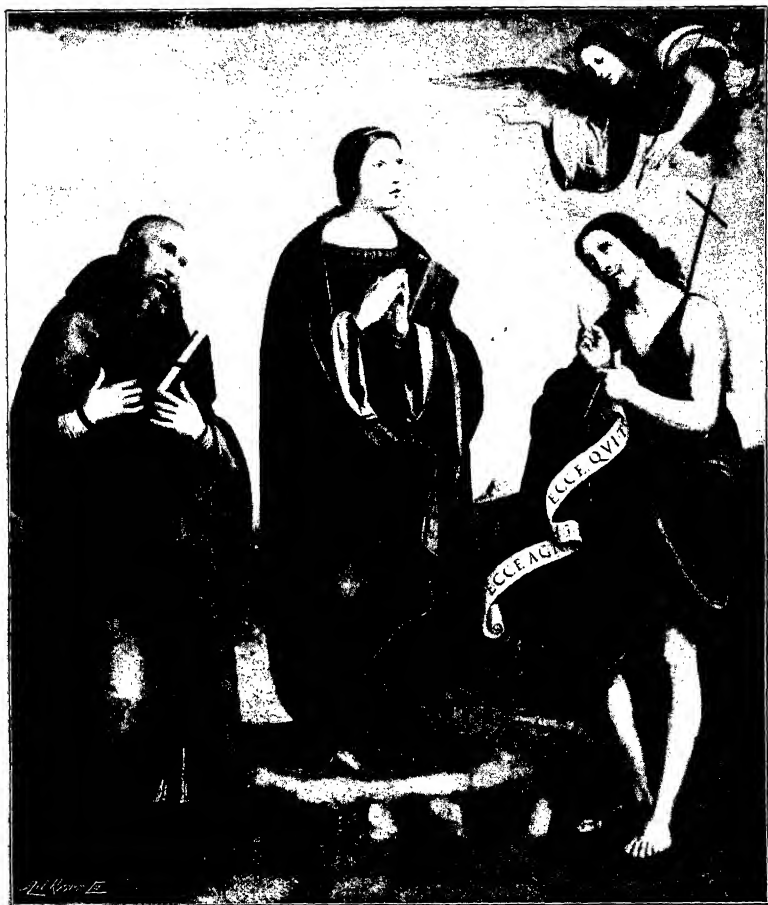
The other two representations of the "Annunciation" come at this time. In the one in the gallery at Bologna (Plate XXII.) there is much the same attitude in the Madonna as was marked in the Franciscan one; and she is seen standing upon a slight eminence clothed in very full draperies, with her hands folded, and a quiet, calm, serious expression upon her thoughtful face. The angel is also much the same; but the two saints are in this case St. John and St. Jerome, a fitting selection, as the picture was ordered for St. John's altar in the small Oratory of San Girolamo di Miramonte, and was commissioned by a donor whose name was Jerome. The old harsh features of the niellist have in this picture begun to fade away; the very spirit of the Quattrocentist that was so marked in the early works of the master, and to which reference must be once more made when a comparison is instituted between the two representations of "The Baptism of Christ," has now given way to the fuller warmth of colouring and the greater sweetness and peace of the Cinquecento; and although in the edges of the draperies there is still to



Hanfstängl photo

Berlin Gallery

THE "ST. GEMINIAN" ALTAR-PIECE



Alinari photo

Bologna Gallery

THE "SAN GIROLAMO DI MIRAMONTE" ALTAR-PIECE

be seen the metallic rigidity that Francia never wholly lost, yet in this work we have a finely conceived and gloriously-coloured picture that stands at the very boundary of the new ways in which the artist was to tread. The long fingers of the hand, the knuckleless hands, the bushy trees, the strange shrinking from the delineation of the ear, the braided hair enclosed by a slight fillet—all these marks of the master's peculiarities are to be found in this work ; but in the piteous gaze of the face of St. Jerome, and above all in the superb colour scheme, we see how much progress has been made in his art by the master ; and we have the foreshadowing of the power of representing the full expression of grief that was hinted at in the Bernardino of Siena in the other "Annunciation," and which was to find its fullest development in the Buonvisi altar-piece now in the National Gallery. The picture glows with rich colour, and is suffused in a warm light that makes the absence of such an atmospheric effect the more marked in the earliest works.

In the third "Annunciation" (Plate XXIII.), which is now in Milan, and was done for the Duke of Mantua, the artist has still further simplified his idea of the scene, and has presented two figures only—the angel and the Madonna. The braided hair of the Virgin and the curly locks of the angel entirely conceal their ears. The architectural features, the pilasters, and the temple are Ferrarese, and the bushy trees are associated with the finer silhouetted ones that stand out against the landscape in a manner that Francia made specially his own. All these points and the treatment of the hands clearly refer the picture to Francia,

and not to Perugino, to whom for a long time the work was attributed. The draperies, in the way in which they fall about the feet and are curled up into strange twists and knots, are distinctive, and so also is the representation of the Dove coming down towards the Virgin within a glowing circle of golden light. The extreme simplicity of the picture makes it one of the most attractive of his works ; but too much stress must not be laid upon its colouring, as it has been terribly cleaned, and unfortunately, as can easily be seen, has been very much touched up, and in parts quite repainted. Its calm composure, stilly quietness, and fine expression of devout feeling, cannot be easily surpassed ; and with all that it has suffered it is certainly an attractive work, and in the gallery at Milan is very well hung.

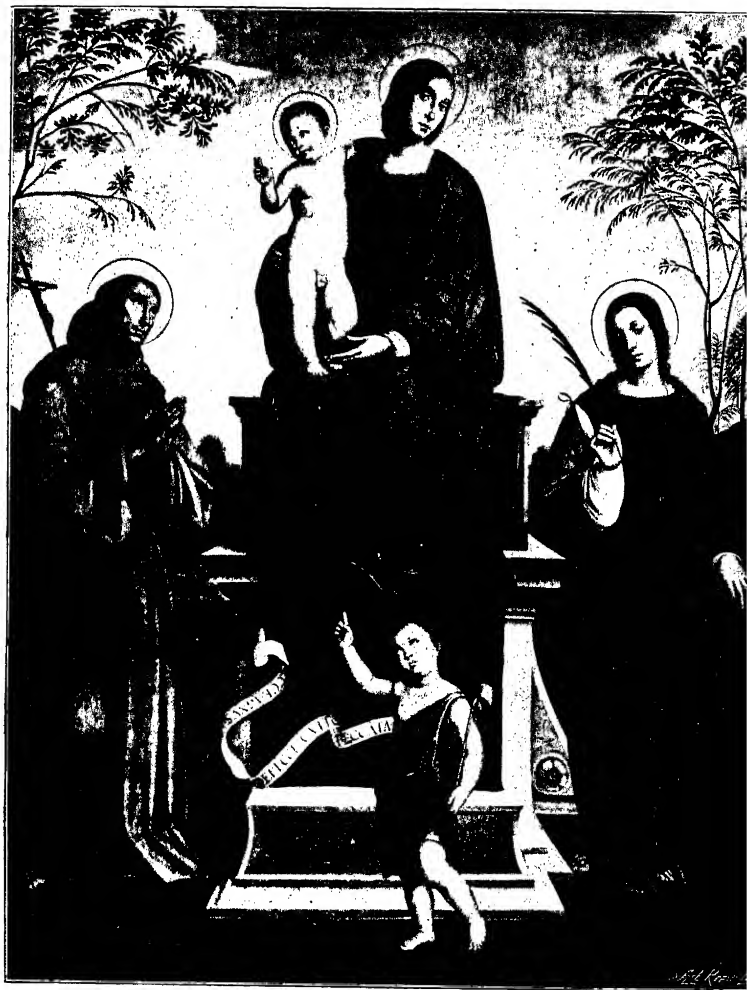
For his great friend Messer Polo Zambecaro, Francia painted, as Vasari tells us, "a tolerably large picture representing the Birth of Christ which was much extolled." This work now hangs in the gallery at Forli, and must be given to this period ; but in some places it is curiously stiff, notably in one of the kneeling angels, and the method in which it is painted differs from that of any pictures with which we have hitherto had to do. In its trees, hills, and general landscape it is the usual work ; but when examination is made of the figures, it will be readily noticed that the colour is put on with a broad full brush without the underpainting that was customary with the artist, and as though it had all to be put on at once and with great rapidity, for fear it should dry unevenly. The faces are different in technique from the rest, and are



Alinari photo

Brera Gallery, Milan

THE DUKE OF MANTUA'S "ANNUNCIATION"



Löwy photo

Vienna Gallery

THE "ST. FRANCIS AND ST. CATHARINE" ALTAR-PIECE

PLATE XXIV

finished very much as usual, if possible with more than the usual care; but the draperies remind the observer of fresco work, and it is from that work that I believe they acquire their curious technique. Vasari tells us that Zambeccaro was so pleased with this picture that he commissioned some fresco decoration for his villa; but I think that Francia must have been doing some fresco work for his patron *before* he did this picture, or at least experimenting with fresco work, and that in this picture he used the fresco methods in oil, or had become so attached to them that he could not fall back again at once into his older method without trying the newer one on this his latest commission. It is mainly in the draperies of the four figures that this peculiarity is to be seen, the two angels approximating more nearly to his usual methods; but the washy, stringy, and hurried technique of the four figures I can only explain by this theory that I have stated. The face of the St. John is the same as the one he had before used in the figure of San Proculo Soldato in the Bentivoglio altar-piece. There are but two ears to be seen in the entire group of seven persons—one on the Divine Child and one on St. Joseph—whilst on one angel can be just seen the tip of the ear under the hair.

In the Vienna picture of the Madonna with two saints (Plate XXIV.) there is the regular pyramidal form to be seen in the grouping, such as Francia adopted over and over again, with the central decorated throne, and, in lieu of the child angels playing upon musical instruments, the little St. John the Baptist with his cross and scroll. The two saints are St. Francis and St. Catherine, and the former is painted from the model which Francia

always used for this saint, and of which, perhaps, the best example is the single figure in Dr. Frizzoni's Gallery (Plate XXV.). Something of the Forli appearance is to be found in the draperies of these three figures, which have a curious washy look, and have been painted with a very full brush; and as nothing is known at the gallery as to the provenance of this work, I am disposed to place it in the same chronology as the Zambeccaro "Nativity." Its colouring is pleasant, but more subdued than that of the Bolognese pictures; but, unfortunately, part of that defect is due to the over-zealous cleaning to which it has been subjected.

The "Madonna in the Rose Garden" at Munich illustrates a thoroughly Umbrian idea, but is treated with all the loving devotion to Nature that was a part of the character of Francia. His landscapes are invariably of a somewhat formal character, but they are truthful, and are presented in the dry manner that he preferred, as it gave to his love of detail more opportunity for display. Here in this picture he has painted the roses on their trellis, and the birds and lizards that sport in the branches, not as a Lombard artist, say Luini, would have painted them, as a grand, rich background for the figures in the picture; but has subordinated them to the central figure, and yet given to their execution all the careful detail that he felt was their due. He has painted them lovingly, in a realistic manner, evidently from Nature, and as one who loved what he was depicting, and he has simply enclosed the Virgin within this hedge of exquisite flowers, planting her feet upon a greensward that is also spangled with flowers, and



Private photo

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

PLATE XXV

gives to the picture all the brilliancy and sparkle that such surroundings were so well qualified to produce. The whole is set in a fine landscape, and the humility of the Virgin, as she adores her Divine Son, could have no more fitting surroundings. The picture is signed, and is an altogether charming one.

There are four pictures which yet belong to the period now under consideration.

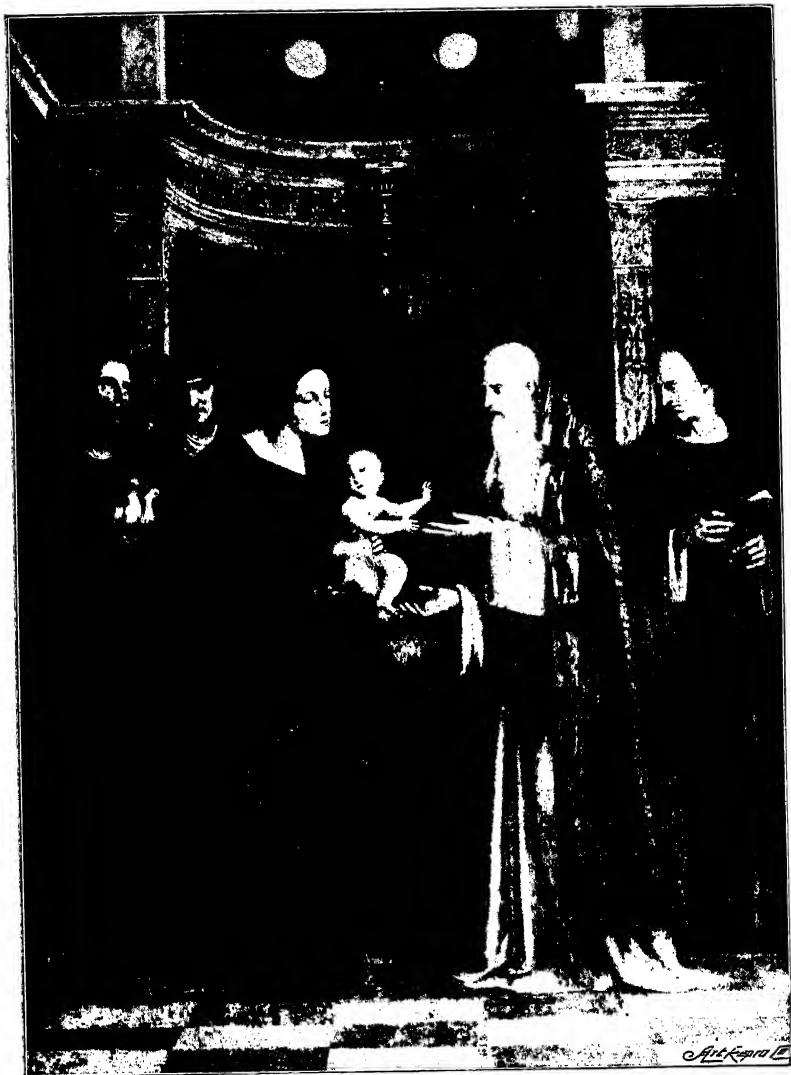
One is the very touching and pathetic head of the "Man of Sorrows" bearing His cross, now to be found in the Lochis Gallery at Bergamo (221), which was the predella picture, or, rather, the square picture in a predella below one of the Bologna altar-pieces, but to which it belonged I have not been able to ascertain definitely. The long, knuckleless hands and the absence of the ear are very distinctive marks of the studio whence it came, and the expression upon the face is so sweet and so full of tender love that perhaps Francia never painted anything, save the Buonvisi picture, that was so fine in its conception. Comparison of it with the much-praised "Ecce Homo" of Guido Reni will reveal what there is of controlled force in Francia's work, and how superior the older man is in his knowledge of what will produce an emotion without any hysterical revulsion.

Another fine work which has the same power is the half-length figure of St. Sebastian that belongs to the Duke of Fernan Nuñez at Madrid. On four other occasions Francia painted the figure of St. Sebastian, always a favourite saint in the paintings of the Renaissance. In the Felicini altar-piece the saint is looking upwards, and the head is raised; in the Bentivoglio

altar-piece the face is looking down; in the Buonvisi altar-piece the face is looking up, but the head is inclined to the right; while the San Martino figure is quite differently posed, and has one arm upraised. The Madrid picture is almost exactly like the one in our own National Gallery, but the pose of the figure is less constrained, and is not urged forward as in the National Gallery picture. The hands are bound behind the figure in every case; the body also is always nude, save for a loin-cloth, and the arrow is to be seen in the side.

The Madrid picture is the most pleasing of all, as there is less anguish in the expression of the face, and a greater sense of peace and speedy deliverance from the sorrows of martyrdom.

An interesting picture hangs at the end of the large room in the Capitol Gallery in Rome which has been attributed to Francia by Signor Venturi, and it requires some little assurance to differ, as I am obliged to do, as to this picture, from so able a critic. To properly understand the picture, it is needful, first of all, to go to Cesena, and examine the signed work by the artist which hangs in the little gallery in that town (Plate XXVI.) and which depicts the same scene—the presentation of the Divine Child to Simeon in the Temple. The Cesena picture is undoubtedly all the work of Francia, and bears his signature and all the characteristics of his work. It is simply conceived, very quiet, placid, and delightful. The scene is set within the apse of a temple with simple architecture, and rich, well-subordinated decoration upon the pilasters and curve of the apse, while the cope of Simeon is painted with all the loving care that Francia would be likely



Private photo

Cesena Gallery

THE PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE

PLATE XXVI

to put into so rich a vestment. There are only six figures in the composition, which is well balanced and not at all crowded, and the faces are quite lovely in their expression.

All this is changed in the Capitol picture. The scene is the same, but how different! The architecture is rich, varied, and florid. In lieu of the simple circular lamp, there are two ornate candelabra, and a central oil-lamp of even more ornate appearance hanging from an ornamental knot. There are thirteen persons in this picture, a lion with St. Jerome, and a dog, which is never to be discovered in any work by Francia, and the whole picture is crowded as Francia's never were. The grouping is much the same, but the details are quite different; the head-dress of the Madonna is such as never appears in any other picture, as a light gauze veil is to be seen twisted in the hair and falling around the neck in lieu of the two simple fillets which are in the Cesena picture. The saints include St. Roch, St. Benedict, and St. James, who do not appear in other pictures by this artist, and, as the Cesena work was done for the Franciscans, it is not at all likely that St. Benedict would appear in it. Further than this, although the grouping is similar and the scene much the same, yet the florid treatment of the Capitol Gallery work will strike an observer at once; and when a careful examination is made for the marks of Francia's work, they will not be found. The hands are different, although in some ways alike; but the clear appearance of the finger-nails and the presence of the knuckles are marked features. Then, the St. Sebastian is an entirely different man from the one whom Francia usually painted, and

has long, curly hair and an eager, expectant face. The St. Jerome also is quite different, and even his lion is a ferocious, staring beast compared with the mild-tempered creature that this artist painted. The dog, as already stated, is quite unlike any animal Francia ever painted, and, in fact, none of the saints really resemble the similar persons whom the artist was in the habit of presenting. One or two theories as to this puzzling work may be stated. It has been suggested that the central part only of the work is by Francia, and that another artist, perhaps Giacomo Francia, added the end portions. It has also been suggested that the central figure alone—that of St. Anna, who more closely resembles Francia's work than any other—was done by the artist, and all the rest by another man. The right group of saints has been attributed to Francia with the central figure, and, again, it has been suggested that the sketch or design was by Francia, and the execution by another man.

Until quite recently it has not been possible to obtain a photograph of the picture at Cesena, but when I was last at that little city—which is so seldom visited—I found that a local man had, for his own amusement, photographed the work, and done it fairly well.

On placing side by side the two pictures, the differences are at once apparent: the quiet simplicity of the genuine picture is contrasted with the crowded, excited, florid, and gorgeous composition of the Capitol picture, and the various adjuncts that appear in the work in Rome, such as book, inkstand, dog, crucifix, lamps, etc., are seen as quite different accessories from those which with loving care Francia was in the habit of using. The more

I look at the two works, the more satisfied I am that the Capitol Gallery picture is not by Francia, as even the colouring which does approximate to his is much more crude, violent in tone, and brilliant than the colouring of the pictures that can with certainty be given to him, and far removed from the original work in Cesena. Even the St. Anna, on which Signor Venturi places some stress, is not like the figure of the same saint in the National Gallery, or as it is in any other work by Francia, and although he confesses that the Capitol Gallery picture has been "altered, varnished, blackened, spoilt, and much retouched," yet there is no one feature about it, save, perhaps, the face of St. Anna and parts of the body of St. Sebastian, that recalls Francia, and it will not suffice to give the work to him on these very slight grounds. I give it back again to Fra Bartolommeo, or else attribute it to Giacomo Francia; but I am convinced by a most careful study of each picture that it is not by Francia, and I am disposed to question whether Signor Venturi has ever studied the work at Cesena, and that this is the reason of his attribution. Fra Bartolommeo very likely painted the work, having the design of Francia in his mind, and elaborating the idea in his accustomed way; the colouring certainly recalls that of his great works at Lucca.

Lastly, in this chapter we come to the picture in the Church of San Martino Maggiore in Bologna, an undoubted work, and one in which the artist has himself designed the frame for the picture, and which still remains in the chapel for which it was first painted. Here is a thoroughly Costa-like work, pyramidal

certainly, but arranged upon an archway in the way in which Costa delighted. The Madonna and Child are seated high up on the arch, which reveals in its opening a fine landscape with hills, trees, buildings, and water, all painted in the somewhat hard method that Francia used. The four saints who stand around are St. Sebastian, St. Anthony of Padua, with his bell, St. Bernardino of Siena, with his tablet bearing the letters "I.H.S.," and a third saint who is called St. Roch, and who, from his attitude, may very possibly be that saint, although the presence of the dagger in his shoulder is most unusual, and points to a saint who was killed, rather than to one who, like St. Roch, died in prison. I am not disposed to accept the guide-book attribution in this case. The features of Saint Sebastian are full of beauty and of hope, and this saint is one of the successes of Francia; but above all is seated the Madonna, and seldom did the artist produce so sweet a figure as he has painted for the Blessed Virgin in this work (Plate XXVII.).

A remarkable fact is that in the hand of the Madonna is an open Bible, containing, painted with considerable skill, a long passage in Hebrew; but the repair of the picture just in this place prevents our being able to decipher more than a few detached letters of it.

Another detail that should not be overlooked is the silk drapery that falls over the foot of the throne. It has upon it a lovely design of pineapples, of striking beauty, which in a modified form was used by the artist in one of the copes in a picture, but which is exactly to be seen in a stained-glass window in the Misericordia Church which Francia designed. The



Poppi photo

Bologna Gallery

SAN MARTINO MAGGIORE ALTAR-PIECE IN ITS ORIGINAL FRANCA FRAME

PLATE XXVII

colouring of the entire picture is very rich, and glows intensely, the reds in the draperies of the angels and saints being particularly effective. The face of the Divine Child has been slightly touched up, but in other respects the picture is perfect.

The grand frame that contains it is worthy of notice, as it is a superb specimen of its kind. The two upright columns, the base, the cornice, and the two square bases to the columns, are all covered with delightful arabesque decoration carved out of the solid wood and gilt. The large brackets that support on either side the Pietà that is above appeared to me to be made of metal and laid upon the wood. They are boldly conceived branches, with leaves finely undercut. Above the central picture is a Pietà closely resembling the one in the gallery that was early work, while below, in a predella panel in the centre, appears a Christ with His cross, like the similar one in the Bergamo Gallery, but not so fine as is that one, nor so large. The arms of the donor, a connection of the Bentivoglio family, appear upon the bases of the columns in colour.

There is a famous work (Plate XXIX., *frontispiece*) now in the Chantilly collection, which, originally in the Northwick sale, passed into the possession of M. Reiset, from whom it was bought for Chantilly by the Duc d'Aumale. It is a wonderful picture, very Umbrian in its characteristics, especially in the way in which St. Albert, the Carmelite saint, is standing, his foot upon the crushed demon, and wrapped in contemplation, indifferent to all around him. Umbrian also is the manner of painting the landscape, but the scene was near to Bologna, and so closely has the artist copied the

scenery, that I have been able to identify the very rock in the picture, at Sasso, near to which the Order had a country home. The Virgin, with her hair braided and an open book in her hand, is raising her eyes to the annunciate angel, who is flying towards her, bearing in his hands the lily branch. The shadows are intense, and somewhat dark, as are those in the other picture painted for the same church; and the picture has the even appearance that is so characteristic of Francia. There are no ears to be seen, either in the figure of the Almighty Father, or of the Virgin, or of the angel, and one only can be seen in the picture, that belonging to the saint. The hands also have no knuckles, and the two groups of trees that are so characteristic are to be noted. The colouring is of a very rich order, full of depth and tone, and the crimsons and blues are specially important, contrasting splendidly with the white of the saint's robe.

The history of this picture before it came to France seems to have been lost. I have, however, found from some records at Bologna, in the Archiginnasio, that it was painted for the Duke Francesco Maria d' Urbino, and given by him to his secretary, Giovanni Maria della Posta, for his family chapel in the Carmelite Church of Modena, and there, on the altar of St. Albert, it was first hung, and there it remained till it was sold to Lord Northwick's agents.

The altar-piece at Berlin, signed and dated 1502 (Plate XXI.), has strong points of affinity with the much later altar-piece that stands in the Church of San Frediano at Lucca, for which place it was first painted. The arrangement of head-dress, of

which mention has been made (see p. 62), must not be taken as an infallible guide in determining the date of Francia's work, as there are great exceptions to the rule that I have laid down. All the works that represent the Blessed Virgin without a religious head-dress, and in which the hair can be seen, and is laid flat or braided, fall, I believe, into one period; but all the works painted in that period, which extended to 1505, were not so represented. The great altar-pieces show the exceptions, as in them there is more or less a religious head-dress, notably in the Felicini, Bentivoglio, and Archdeacon's altar-pieces; but it is not so decided as it became in later years, and after 1505 we never find the plain hair or braided locks, but invariably the religious garb.

The Berlin altar-piece is an exceptional case, in which in 1502 the style adopted always after 1505 appears; and it is also exceptional inasmuch as the Madonna occupies in the sky, and the saints occupy on the earth, the positions which the artist gave to them in the San Frediano altar-piece, and which he gave on no other occasions. In the Berlin picture we see the Madonna bearing the Divine Child, seated within a halo of cherubs thoroughly Peruginesque, and painted just at the time when Perugino's influence was strongest upon the artist, but the personality of Francia is apparent in the angel with outstretched arms which is under the feet of the Madonna, and which is not in the least like the work of Perugino. Below, grouped in the familiar Umbrian manner, and in the midst of a landscape almost Umbrian in its character, are six saints. First comes St. Geminianus, Bishop of Modena, patron and

protector of the city. Next stands a saint called St. Bernard, but whom I believe to be St. Francis, as the picture was painted for a Franciscan church, in which a Cistercian saint would not be represented. The figure holds the slight wood crucifix with which Francia always distinguished St. Francis; and although the face is not quite like the one he usually gives to the saint of Assisi, yet I can conceive of its being no other man, and certainly do not think that it is St. Bernard. Next stands St. Dorothy; then St. Catherine, to whom the church was dedicated; then St. Jerome; and finally St. Louis of Toulouse, who so often appears in the Umbrian pictures, and was the patron saint of the donor of the picture, and who has his crown at his feet.

The altar-piece at Lucca (Plate XXVIII.) has many points in common with the Berlin one. There is the same mandorla of glory and the same cherubs' heads. There are the same clouds in the sky, and the figures are grouped in the same way on the earth at the foot of the picture. In the Lucca picture, however, the scene depicted is the Coronation of the Madonna, who kneels humbly before the Father, who is attended by two adoring angels, and who with a rod touches the crown of the Queen of Heaven as she kneels. Below, on the flower-bedecked ground, stand four figures, and in the centre kneels a fifth; and in respect to these figures, Francia has returned to an old habit, and has given to each of the standing figures scrolls upon which are lengthy inscriptions. The figures are those of St. Anselm and St. Augustine on the right, both habited in rich copes (one of which can still be



Alinari photo

San Frediano, Lucca

THE CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN

seen in Lucca, and is perfectly copied), wearing mitres, and carrying, the one a cross, and the other a crosier. On the left are two Kings—David and Solomon—wearing crowns, etc.; carrying scrolls, as are the other two; and King David is playing upon a psaltery, to which a further allusion will be found on p. 84. In the centre kneels an Augustinian monk in his habit, and below, in the predella, are painted four scenes from the early history of the Order; and the whole picture is a glorification of that influential Order for the important church where it still remains.

The inscriptions were selected by reason of their reference to the Virgin. That of St. Anselm reads: "*Non puto esse verum amatorem virginis qui celebrare respuit festam suæ conceptionis,*" and may be thus translated: "I do not consider him to be a true lover of the Virgin who refuses to recognise the festival of her conception"; and that of St. Augustine reads: "*In cælo qualis est pater, talis est filius; in terra qualis est mater, talis est filius,*" and may be thus rendered: "What the Father is in heaven, such is the Son; what the Mother is on earth, such is the Son." It is not easy to identify the work of St. Anselm from which the words used by Francia could be taken. There are two documents bound up amongst his works in Migne's edition which used to be attributed to the saint, one a sermon on the Immaculate Conception, the other an account of the legend of the Abbot Helsinus, to whom Our Lady is reported to have made a communication during a storm at sea to the effect that, if he would promise to celebrate the Feast of the Conception in his monastery at Ramsey, she would cause the storm to cease.

Later on a Council in London in the fourteenth century states that St. Anselm instituted the feast in England, which may have been the case, or more probably may have been gathered from the document as to the Abbot Helsinus, which was at that time attributed to St. Anselm.

These documents are not, however, accepted by all scholars as the work of St. Anselm, although they belong to his period, and there are passages in the works of the saint that do not support the doctrine which these passages enunciate. The words from St. Augustine I have been quite unable to trace.

The theological question involved in these quotations was at the time of St. Anselm a matter of discussion, as it had not yet been declared *de fide*. In all probability Francia was guided solely by the words of his instructions, and attributed to the saints the words which the Augustinians at that time accepted as their utterances. The question is purely one of the science of criticism.

CHAPTER IV

MUSIC AND COLOUR

It would appear that Francia, with his many varied capacities, must have possessed a love of music, and very probably was acquainted with the art, and perhaps was even a performer himself. The use he makes of musical instruments in his pictures points to a love of music, and it is important to notice that he paints the instruments that were in use in his time so accurately that they can be identified and described.

The Italian painters were quite frank in their anachronisms, and did not hesitate to introduce the instruments of their own times into the sacred scenes, any more than they hesitated to place the drama of sacred writ in the midst of their own scenery, and to associate with it persons dressed in the fashion of their own times. The great advantage of their action in this respect to those who have come after them is the value their pictures have in giving us clear information as to the times in which they lived and the appliances that were used. In ecclesiastical vestments there has been no change, and the copes, chasubles and dalmatics that the Bishops wear in the pictures are the same as those used in the present day. In the habits of the religious the same conservatism exists, and the same habits can

be seen worn by the successors of the monks and friars in the pictures.

Much of the architecture still remains that was depicted in these old pictures; the country is the same, and the scenes in which these thrilling events are represented as taking place can be visited at this day, and the effect of Bolognese or Umbrian scenery can be witnessed and realized. We can gaze at the same sky as the artists saw, and can in our imagination people it with the celestial visions which they saw as they knelt in rapt adoration. We can enter the churches in which they worshipped, and can be present at the same sublime service that stirred their souls to such noble effort; but the instruments which they heard we can but very seldom either hear, or even see, and we are therefore the more grateful to them for having painted with such accuracy that we can attempt to understand the music which they heard on the instruments that they used. Francia stands out as one who constantly introduced the musical instruments of his time into his greatest pictures.

In the Felicini altar-piece (Plate XIII.) the child-angel at the foot of the throne is playing upon a lute—the instrument upon which the Italian makers lavished all their finest skill. It was perhaps one of the most difficult of all instruments to play, with its numerous strings and the great difficulty of keeping it in tune. The Italian lutes of Francia's period had generally eleven strings, five pairs of unisons and one single treble. The tuning was in fourths and thirds, and the instrument was played with the fingers. No instrument was more decorative than the lute, as its curved

back, ornamental head—usually turned at about a right angle—and, above all, its beautiful “rose” underneath the strings, all lent themselves to the most elaborate treatment. The delicately sensitive timbre of the voice made it a great favourite, and some of the very oldest instrumental compositions that we possess were written for this instrument. The one held by the angel in the Felicini picture is of a very simple kind, and the head does not bend back as much as was the case in the finer lutes; but the shape of it is delightful, and the “rose” is a very elaborate piece of carving into the delineation of which the artist has put his best work.

Another lute, a lemon-shaped one, is to be seen in the Bentivoglio altar-piece (Plate XIV.), held upright upon the knee by the angel. A full view of this one is to be seen, and it will be perceived that the head is set at a right angle, whereas the head of the one last named was at an obtuse angle. The number of the pegs and strings can be counted, and will be found eleven in number, tuned as was the other one—five pairs of unisons and one single treble. This is also a treble lute, and perhaps somewhat larger than the one just named; but, owing to the position of it, this is not quite certain. Its pear- or lemon-shaped back will distinguish it clearly from a guitar, with which lutes are sometimes confused.

Another lute is to be seen in the St. Petersburg picture (Plate XX.), and this one has a specially beautiful “rose” carved in a most elaborate design of a central star with roses around it. This is quite a big lute, with a fine handsome curve, and the head is inlaid with ivory and mother-of-pearl.

A fourth can be seen in the hand of the angel who is

seated below the miraculous Madonna in San Vitale, around which Francia painted a choir of angels. It also is a lute with a carved right-angled head. In Francia's time lutes were the most popular instruments in Europe, originally, perhaps, brought from Arabia, but finding their home in Italy, Spain, and England, and in constant demand. At Padua, near to where Francia lived, there were a great many lutes made, some of them specially fine, and the manufactory continued in that city down to the end of the seventeenth century.

In the Bentivoglio altar-piece (Plate XIV.) appears another instrument as well as the lute. This is the viol, and the one that is depicted is the viola da braccio, which is played with a bow. This is a member of the great family of viols, which are distinguished from violins by many striking characteristics. The edges of the back are flush with the ribs, there being no projecting edge as in the violin; the back is flat, and not curved; the sound-holes are C-shaped rather than f-shaped; the corners often square; and the peg-box terminates in a carved head, often that of a woman or Cupid. The one under consideration was the alto viol, which later than Francia's date had sympathetic metal strings added underneath the gut strings, and was then called the viola d'amore. It has six strings, which were tuned in fourths, with the exception of an interval of a major third, which occurs towards the middle of the compass. The one in this picture is of a somewhat stiff, formal shape; but in the drawing by Francia in the Albertina in Vienna, is to be seen a very large alto viol, which is still more formal in design, and belongs to quite an early period. The end of this one is only

slightly curved, but the one in the Bentivoglio picture has the end ornamented with two carved volutes. The bridge of these instruments was in Francia's time close up to the ornamental end, and therefore close to the shoulder in playing; but later on it took a position in the centre of the instrument. In the St. Petersburg picture (Plate XX.) can be seen another viol, which is either a large tenor viol or a small bass one, probably the latter, and which, like the other, had an ornamental peg-box decorated with ivory and mother-of-pearl, matching the lute in the same picture. This one had seven strings, tuned, in the same way as the lute, in fourths and a third, but a fifth lower than the other viol, and the sound produced was one of great richness, true tenor in tone, soft and penetrating rather than ringing and brilliant. The sound-holes of this are beautifully curved, and the instrument altogether is a fine one.

In the San Vitale picture the other angel is using a very rare instrument—an orpharion (or orphareon, as it is sometimes spelled). At the present time this is perhaps the very rarest of all old Italian instruments, and does not appear to have been at any time a popular instrument.

Mr. Dolmetsch, who knows more about old instruments than any other living man, and to whose kindness I am indebted for much of the information in this chapter, only knew of two orpharions in Europe. One was sold at Christie's, in 1898, in the sale of the Bardini collection exhibited at the New Gallery, and fetched £347, and is believed to have gone to America; and the other is the priceless instrument which

belongs to Lord Tollemache, and which is to be seen under a glass case in the little anteroom on the first-floor at famous Helmingham. This one belonged to Queen Elizabeth, and when she stayed at Helmingham from August 14 to 18, 1561, she played upon it, and then gave it to her hostess, the wife of Sir Lionel Tollemache. Orpharions are flat-backed instruments strung with brass wire, eleven strings, tuned in fourths and a third, as the viol was, and the head, with the peg-box, sometimes handsomely carved, as in the lute. The shape of the one painted by Francia can be clearly seen in the picture, and the number of pegs and strings can be counted. The combination of the two instruments, the lute and the orpharion, is unusual, and in that way the picture has exceptional interest.

In the San Frediano at Lucca picture (Plate XXVIII.) King David is playing upon a psaltery, of which only seven pegs and strings are to be seen in the picture, but which probably possessed other strings pegged into the curve of the instrument. This was a species of lyre or harp having a very variable number of metal strings (brass only), and tuned in a diatonic scale.

In another drawing in the Albertina can be seen a double pipe and a single pipe, the single one being a sort of shawm, with the reed protected in what is called a pirouette. This had eight holes. The double pipe was after the nature of a flute, as it was not possible in a double pipe to have a reed. It had ten holes in front for nine notes, the lower two being for the optional interchange of the right or left hand.

It is important to understand that the Old Masters painted their representations of musical instruments

from the actual objects themselves when in the hands of the performers, and that they did it with such accuracy that the instruments may not only be distinguished, but the method of holding the bow may be learned from the picture, and in many cases the very chord reproduced that the performer is producing in the picture. This is so much the case that I am informed by Mr. Dolmetsch that the playing of the great viola da gamba in the picture of St. Cecilia in the Louvre was so perfectly represented by Domenichino that from it he was able to learn the method of bowing. In some pictures of viols he was able even to realize the chord that was being produced.

The first person to relinquish facts, and to try and produce an imaginative arrangement of musical instruments, was Raphael, and his work can be seen and contrasted in the very gallery that contains so many of the works of Francia.

In his picture of St. Cecilia can be seen how he failed when he allowed his imagination to run wild. The viola on the ground is broken as a viol could not by any possibility break; the very strongest parts have given way in a manner in which the wood could not fracture. The tailpiece, which is held in position only by the strings, remains in its place stretched right forward, although the strings, which alone could hold it, are all broken; and, most wonderful of all, the bridge, which could not by any possibility stand upright by itself, is standing bravely up without a string anywhere near it. The pipes of the portable organ also, which from its position, if once loosened, must inevitably fall out of the frame, are only just thinking of doing so, and

are slowly moving forward at various degrees of speed, some of the heaviest of them going far slower than the very light ones move, and many of them keeping quite still in their positions with the most remarkable equanimity.

This is the contrast to the marvellous accuracy of the earlier school of artists, and especially to the skill with which Francia painted the instruments which it is quite evident he loved so well.

It may be well also to refer to a striking characteristic of the art of Francia in respect to colour, which consists in his fondness for making one colour tone all the effect of a picture and give the key to its colour scheme.

In the Manzuoli altar-piece green is the leading colour. It appears in the shot colour of the vestments, in the mantle, in the lining of the vestments, the armour, the hills, the columns, the dragon, and the throne.

In the Bentivoglio altar-piece (Plate XV.) the leading colour is blue; in the Scappi altar-piece (Plate XVIII.) it is brown; in the Felicini one (Plate XIII.) it is reddish-brown; and in "The Annunciation" (Plate XXII.) it is very distinctly red of a full deep hue.

It is hardly needful to insist further upon this point, but it will be found very characteristic of our master right down to his death; and in most of his chief works some colour that in his mind was suitable, either for its effect in relation to the subject, or in respect to the decoration of the church, or the position of the picture, was selected, and gave the general hue to the picture, and all the other colours were modified so as to come into full harmony with it. The effect of the red in "The Annunciation" is very inspiring, and that of

the green is remarkable in the Manzuoli picture, and the manner in which the colour has been introduced into the accessories, and each tint blended with the other, is a proof of a remarkable love of colour, an instinct for its right use and a power of blending that is notable.

Francia was evidently a man to whom music and colour appealed with overwhelming force.

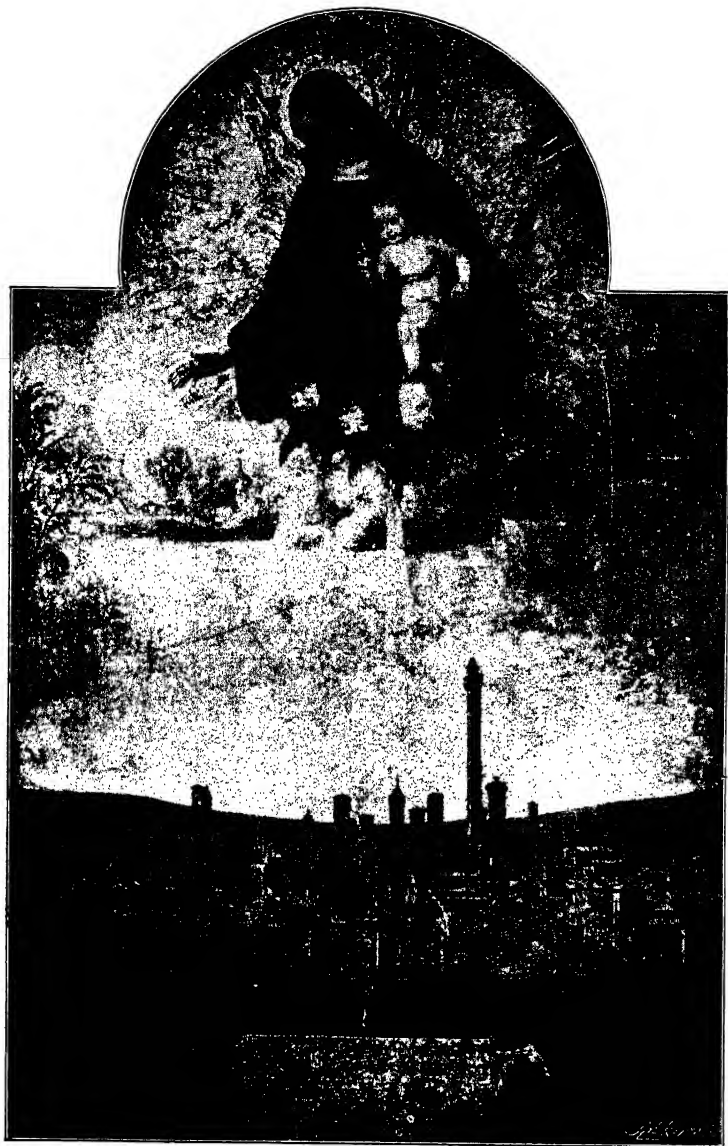
CHAPTER V

FRESCO DECORATION

IN 1505 Francia painted, by special contract for the commune of his native town, in the dining-hall of the Podestà Comunale, a Madonna known as the "Madonna del Terremoto" (Plate XXX.), to commemorate the deliverance of the place from total destruction by an earthquake which visited Bologna in June of that year, and caused the greatest alarm and injury.

Many houses were thrown down, and some of the finest palaces in the place were much injured, but the city "sent up a great cry for assistance," says the old chronicler, and "Our Lady interceded, and the quaking was stopped."

This picture is often quite overlooked by the visitor to the town, and is, in fact, not now very easy to find. The chapel to which twenty years afterwards it was removed has been destroyed, as the magistrates, so the custode told me, "do not now need to go to church, and have given up that sort of thing long ago;" but the picture is still *in situ*, and shielded by an iron guard. Inasmuch as it is, however, simply on a wall of what is now used as a passage to other rooms, and as it is often covered up by a large wardrobe which stands in front of it, it is not remarkable that this fresco



Poppi photo

MADONNA DEL TERREMOTO, FRESCO, 1505

Bologna

is often missed, and that the frescoes in the Chapel of St. Cecilia are said to be the only ones now remaining of Francia's work in Bologna. As a matter of fact, the fresco is one of the most important things in the city, as it gives a picture of what the city was like in 1505, when all its numerous towers were standing; and many of the buildings may still be recognised. The walls are represented, and their bastions and gates; the Torre Asinelli and the Torre Garisenda can be seen; the incomplete nave of San Petronio, the churches of San Giovanni and the Misericordia and San Vitale can all be recognised by one who knows Bologna; and the strength of the place can be realized from this curiously accurate perspective view of it. Above, in the sky, is the Madonna with her Divine Son blessing the city, and below, upon a banner, is the dedicatory inscription: V . M . D. TERREMOTV . CVNCTA . DIRRV-
ENTE . DICT . ET . COS . VRBE . SERVATA . DEIPARAE .
VIRGINIS . IMAGINEM.

"When an earthquake destroyed everything, the city being preserved, the Dictator and Council dedicated this image of the Madonna to the Virgin Mother of God."

The Madonna is garbed in religious dress, as she appears in all the succeeding works of the artist.

The chief works that remain to show us what Francia could do in fresco are those in the Chapel of Sta. Cecilia. One only of these frescoes bears a date, and that is not one of the two done by Francia, but the fresco next to it, which was the work of Costa, and is dated 1506. This, however, in all probability, gives us the date for

the entire series, which it is almost certain was completed before 1507. The Chapel of Santa Cecilia is attached to the Church of San Giacomo Maggiore, and was founded by Giovanni Bentivoglio as a family chapel, in which he desired to be buried, and was erected by the architect Gasparo Nadi. The work was commenced in 1481, but was stopped for some time, and the building was not completed till 1504, and then the work of decorating it no doubt began, and was entrusted to Francia and Costa and to their pupils. Only two of the panels were the work of Francia, and these are the two nearest to the altar on the Gospel and Epistle side of the chapel, and, very fortunately, they are the two in the best condition of the entire series. There are altogether ten depicting the story of St. Cecilia, and the two by Francia illustrate "The Marriage of St. Cecilia and Valerian" and "The Burial of St. Cecilia." Two others in the series are by Costa, whose work is in each case next to that of Francia; three are by Aspertini, one by Chiodarolo, and two others are attributed either to Giacomo Francia, or to Giulio, his brother, or else to Cesare Tamaroccio.

The fresco of the marriage (Plate XXXI.) is the favourite one of the two, and is a charming conception admirably carried out. The braided and filleted hair give the characteristics of the period of Francia's activity, and the grouping is said to be the result of another influence which at this time began to enter the life of the artist—the influence of Raphael. But of that we must treat in another chapter.

It is important to notice that the scenery is that of the immediate neighbourhood of Bologna, being clearly



Poppi photo

San Giacomo Maggiore, Bologna

taken from Sasso, where the very defile at the entrance of which the scene is taking place can be seen.

Francia has by this time cut himself adrift from whatever Umbrian influence he ever had, and is frankly Bolognese. His faces have no longer the dreamy look of the saints of Perugino, nor do they stand isolated one from the other, each occupied with its own reflections and indifferent to what is going on around. Francia has pulled his figures together. He has given to them a common interest, and they take their part in the scene in which they are represented. Here in this fresco is an instance, as it will be noticed that each of the marriage-party is interested in the ceremony, and that there is a subdued hum of conversation going on between the attendants. The blushing, shrinking bride and the almost too eager groom are both of them subjects of interest and of talk, and the entire group is giving more or less attention to what is transpiring in its midst.

The marriage takes place under an arcade that in its accurate perspective recalls the work of Piero della Francesca; but it is situate at the entrance to a mountainous defile upon one spur of which is perched a little temple. To anyone who is conversant with the scenery around Bologna, or who has even travelled into the city from Pistoja, and has looked upon the mountains as he comes in sight of the river Reno, it will be quite evident that the artist has not gone far afield for his inspiration. The crooked Valley of the Reno—the precipitous mountains on either side, rugged and jagged, clothed so scantily with the rough bushy trees on their upper spurs, and nearer their feet with the wind-blown chestnuts, so strangely warped and gnarled in their

growth by reason of the wind and the poverty of the soil—can all be seen in the works of the artist; and where, as in this marriage, he depicts the very entrance to a peaceful and fertile valley, he is not the less accurate in the light waving larches, in the yellow-green of the grass, and in the fuller-grown, rounder chestnuts that adorn the slopes.

Something more than the buoyant spaciousness of the Umbrian masters has entered into his soul, and he looks out upon his native mountains and valleys with a better appreciation of their expanse of beauty. Although he still places all his figures in the immediate foreground, yet he is able in these later works to carry on the eye to the country that lies beyond the hills and beyond the streams, and to give that out-of-doors effect for which one looked in vain in his earlier works.

The Burial of the saint is not so well preserved as is the Marriage; but the same power of combining the figures into one complete whole is just as apparent in it as in the marriage, and in the very centre of the group the body of the saint resting in its long sleep—peaceful, quiet, and composed, as if in innocent slumber—is charmingly presented, and can hardly be excelled in beauty. Sasso is again the scene of the mournful event, and the solemnity of the occasion is well marked upon every face in the group. Francia never succeeded in representing great gaiety, fun, or amusement on the faces of his spectators, nor did he ever depict laughter; but in the representation of deep sorrow he was at this later period of his life *facile princeps*, albeit he ever presented the restraining power of faith in holding back the mourner from the hysteria of grief.

Profound melancholy marks the aspect of this group. The first bitterness is past, but the sight of the lifeless body has awakened the deeper sorrows mingled with the griefs of anticipated loneliness and of trouble yet in store for others. Even the men—strong, healthy fellows as they are—must needs turn aside their faces from the body that they are bearing to the tomb, lest their emotions gain the mastery over them. One woman, who was, it is clear, at the marriage, is with uplifted hand speaking of the goodness of the saint. The venerable Pontiff is uttering the words of the solemn office; but all the rest are wrapt in grief, dwelling upon the sorrows that have past, and contemplating those that will surely affect all who are known to be present at this sad ceremony. Even amidst all the sorrow of the scene the idea of a future life is not overlooked, as high up in the lovely blue sky can be seen a sweet-faced angel bearing off to Paradise the soul of the departed saint.

As a picture the fresco is admirably arranged and every detail well thought out; and while in its technique we miss the patient, minute painting of the goldsmith, which would have been out of place in such a work, we welcome instead the broad, flowing, easy, luscious brushwork that the quick-drying fresco demanded.

A quite remarkable knowledge of anatomy must not be overlooked in the forceful action of one of the men who steadies himself against the marble tomb with one foot and strains to obtain the proper purchase for lifting the body of the saint, and it should also be remarked that but one ear is to be seen in the whole group of twelve persons! The colouring is pleasant, subdued, but rich; the dead flesh is admirably painted,

and the reds of some of the draperies glow with a brilliance which is the more remarkable as the fresco has been very badly treated, and it is a wonder that so much of it remains to be seen. All is full of swaying movement, instinct with life, and conveying to the spectator the undoubted impression of real genius.

The existence of these frescoes makes us the more regret the loss of what Vasari considered the finest works of the master in this method of painting—the decorations that were done for the palace of the Bentivoglio. The building, Calvi tells us, was commenced by Ercole Bentivoglio, in the Strada San Donato in Bologna, and was of regal magnificence. Its completion was undertaken by Giovanni Bentivoglio, and he called from Ferrara, Modena, and his own city the best workers in fresco to decorate the rooms. Having, however, seen the work of Francia in fresco—perhaps the Madonna del Terremoto—he desired the artist to take in hand the decoration of one of the best rooms, an apartment which he himself proposed to use; and Francia proposed to illustrate the story of Judith and Holofernes. Nothing of this work now remains, as the palace had been destroyed in the time of Vasari, and he records the total destruction of these priceless works. In the Albertina, however, is preserved a study for the representation of Judith with the head in her hand, just as she has returned from the camp, and is placing the head in a bag, which her servant is carrying. From this drawing we can get an idea of the movement that must have existed in these frescoes, of the *verve* and swing that characterized them, and of the skill with which they were drawn. Vasari goes into a long

description of them. He speaks of the camp of the warrior, of the approach of the Jewish heroine, of the action that freed the people from their servitude and the world from a tyrant, and of the maid who, with her eyes fixed upon her mistress with an expression of the most absolute obedience and affection, bent down to receive into her keeping the bloody head of Holofernes.

Vasari also states that, in the room over that which contained this great work, Francia had painted a dispute of philosophers, which was coloured to represent bronze; and which was, he tells us, "admirably executed, and expressed the thought of the master with great effect."

Nothing of this fine work now remains. The palace had five great halls in it, and 244 vaulted rooms, which were rich in tapestry and regal furniture. The loggia, which led from the third court to the garden, was decorated by Costa with frescoes of the burning of Troy, and around the house were lovely gardens, "where cool fountains plashed their waters, and white statues and busts gleamed in the sun." Beyond the palace were extensive rooms for retainers, granaries, and armories.

The death of Alexander VI., on August 18, 1503, was speedily followed by important changes at Bologna. Pius III. reigned but a few weeks, and in October of the same year Julius II. came to the throne. The Bentivogli had been ruling in Bologna, and other Governors in neighbouring States nominally as the deputies of the Supreme Pontiff; but they had all practically cast off the yoke of the Pope, and were using their position as if they were independent Sovereigns, and setting com-

pletely at defiance the orders of the ruler of the States of the Church. This condition of insubordination did not at all suit the warlike Pontiff, who was determined to put down these petty tyrannies, and bring the dominions of the Church into direct subjection to the Holy See. In the autumn of 1506 he left Rome to proceed against Bologna, as this city had more than any other taken up a position of independence. In October he reached Cesena, where it appears Francia was at that time living, and where in all probability he was arranging for his picture of "The Presentation," if not actually engaged upon it. From this city he issued a Bull against Giovanni Bentivoglio, who was actually at that moment conspiring against him, raising an army to meet the Pontifical troops, and stirring up the people of Bologna to resist their lawful Sovereign, in whose name he had been nominally ruling. By the Bull Pope Julius declared Bentivoglio to be an enemy to the Church, delivered his goods to pillage, and granted a plenary indulgence to anyone who should deliver him into the hands of the Holy See.

Long before this time the despotic rule of Bentivoglio, the vast expenditure upon his palace which he had enforced, and the consequent high state of the taxation in the city, coupled with the oppression of his sons, who were not so popular as their father, and whom the people determined never to receive as their rulers, had made the citizens uneasy and discontented, and they were ready therefore to receive the Pope.

Bentivoglio tried to obtain the assistance of neighbouring States, and he did succeed in getting many promises of help, notably from Modena and Ferrara;

but as the Pontifical troops drew nearer and nearer to the city, and proved their fighting power by several short skirmishes, the other States withdrew their promises, joined the Papal forces, and left the Bentivogli to their fate. Deserted by his allies, and finding, when too late, that he had infuriated his people by his oppression, the old ruler, who with all his harshness had been so great a patron of the fine arts in Bologna, fled from the city he had beautified, and with his wife and family took refuge for a short time in the French camp, and thence quickly passed to Milan.

At Milan he settled down, but sent on his son Alessandro to France to plead with Louis XII. for his aid against the Pope. The League of Cambrai had, however, been arranged, and the friendship of the ambitious Pope was of too great importance to the King of France and the Emperor (to whom Alessandro also went) for either of them to be induced to take up arms to help Bentivoglio. While the son was absent pleading for help in a lost cause, the old ruler, Giovanni Bentivoglio, died (February, 1508), worn out with worry and sadness at having to leave his beloved Bologna, and at the news that reached him of the destruction in that city. His son, who married Ippolita Sforza in 1492, continued to reside in Milan until his death in 1532, and he and his wife were, like their father, buried, not in the Chapel of St. Cecilia, where they had wished to lie, but far away in Milan, in the Church of San Maurizio Maggiore, which, in continuance of their constant love of beauty, they had employed Luini to decorate in fresco in the manner adopted by Francia in Bologna. They left but one child, Alessandra, who took the veil in the convent

attached to the same church, and who died in that monastery, and was buried near to her parents. Their portraits can all be seen in Luini's lovely frescoes over the high altar in the church. They had carried off with them the Archdeacon's altar-piece of "The Nativity," and that picture remained in Milan till 1816, when it was returned to Bologna, where now it hangs. Meantime the Pope had entered the city at the head of his troops, riding upon a "great white horse," so says the record, and distributing "with his own hand," as he passed down the streets, the medals which he had caused Francia to make, and which bore upon them the fateful words: "Bononia per Julium a Tyranno Liberata." The people received the Pontiff gladly, and knelt in long lines down the streets to receive his blessing and make their submission, and for a few days all was peace and festivity. Then, alas! Ercole Marescotti upbraided the people for leaving in their midst any signs of the past oppression, and excited them with the story that the Bentivogli would soon return if their home was left in the city. The Pontiff, having obtained the complete submission of the place, was on the point of moving on with his forces to Perugia to subdue that city also, when the people, fired by the words of Marescotti, and led by him, advanced to the San Donato Palace and crying, "To prevent the vulture's return, we must destroy his nest," set fire to the glorious structure, and burned it to the ground. Soon the splendid palace that had been such a dream of beauty had become a smouldering heap of ruins, and all the lovely frescoes that adorned it had perished for ever.

The news, as we have seen, reached the refugees in

Milan, and Giovanni was overcome with grief at the loss of his works of art, and the precious books and manuscripts that he had collected. He wrote to his wife, who was at that time in Mantua, to tell her of the trouble that had overwhelmed the family, and did so in such bitter terms that she, not daring to return to him in his anguish, strangled herself, and on the news of this further calamity reaching Milan, coupled with the fact that no help was forthcoming from France or from the Holy Roman Empire, the old ruler lost all interest in life, and a few days afterwards was discovered dead upon his couch.

So passed away the great glory of the family of the Bentivogli, immortalized by Francia, and to whose wise discernment Bologna owes so much of the beauty that adorns it at the present day.

CHAPTER VI

THE LATEST AND BEST WORKS OF FRANCIA

WE do not know what pictures Francia painted during the year in which his patrons fled from Bologna, nor have we any records proving what other work he did besides the medals for the Pontiff, who had again assumed the power in his own city, and the next landmark that we have to guide us is found in the date upon the Dresden picture, 1509. There are beyond this two pictures to be mentioned bearing the dates 1512 and 1514, and two dated 1515, one at Parma, and one at Turin; and then we have the date of the death of the artist, 1517. Between these dates comes the long series of pictures of the Madonna and Child, the most bewildering of all the works of Francia to set into chronological order, and, in fact, the most difficult to deal with in any way, so much have they been copied, and so much was the type of Francia's group repeated by the host of his pupils. It must honestly be stated, in respect to this group of pictures, that there is no finality in attributions; from time to time evidence may arise that will upset the best-founded theories, especially seeing that the sons of Francia so cleverly copied their father's work that it is a matter almost of impossibility to be quite certain as to several pictures that bear the name of the artist. On the whole, I have



Poppi photo

Bologna Gallery

MADONNA AND CHILD WITH ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

PLATE XXXII

only included in my list those pictures which I have seen myself, and which have satisfied me by their colouring, characteristics, sweetness, accuracy of drawing, and general resemblance to the certain works of Francia, that they may be given to him; but it is quite possible that in some of them I may be mistaken in my assumption, and that they should be given rather to his school.

I think that the "Virgin and Child with St. Francis" in the Bologna Gallery (Plate XXXII.) may certainly be accepted without hesitation. The figure of St. Francis is a very fine one, and one which constantly appears in the works of the master. The hands are long and the fingers pointed, and there are no knuckles to be seen.

There should be another picture closely resembling this one, which at one time belonged to the Zambeccari family, and was described by Crowe and Cavalcaselle as having an inscription upon it and the date 1503; but in this missing one the Child is holding a bird in its hand, whereas in the Bologna one there is no bird to be seen, nor any inscription.

The bird, however, and the same saint are to be seen in the fine picture belonging to Mr. J. E. Taylor, in which also is represented another saint, St. Jerome; this is also a picture which may, I consider, be accepted. The treatment of the gauze veil, the two different kinds of trees, the knuckleless hands, and the colouring, all bespeak the work of the master.

In Sir George Trevelyan's picture there is the same bird, the same gauze veil, the same trees, and the same hands; and although the colouring is not nearly so

fine or so rich as in Mr. Taylor's picture, yet the same workmanship can be detected in this also.

St. Francis is also to be seen in the Verona picture, and the bird and the veil as well, while the characteristic absence of ears in this work is to be noted. The trees are, however, quite different, as the finer silhouetted ones are absent, and the painting of the landscape appears to be by a different hand from the one that painted the figures. I think that this picture is partly the work of Francia, but has been completed by one of his pupils.

St. Jerome appears in the National Gallery picture, accompanied by a female saint with a palm, and here the same baby is to be found as is represented in Sir George Trevelyan's picture and in the Bologna one. The landscape also is right, and this picture can, I think, be safely accepted.

In the Munich picture we have quite a different Mother and quite a different Child, and there are two angels in the picture, one on either side of the Mother and Child. Their long, soft, curling hair falls down over their ears, concealing them from view, and the religious garb of the Virgin covers her ears also. There is no landscape, the colouring is very rich and full of character; but the distinguishing point in this picture that makes its attribution so clear is the pattern of the drapery upon which the Divine Child is standing, as this is identical with the design of one of the copes in a signed altar-piece by the artist.

The same Madonna is to be found in the picture in the Barberini Palace, even to the very posture, although in many other ways this well-known picture differs from

the other groups. The child St. John appears in it with his wooden cross—a favourite device of Giulio Francia—and the landscape differs very much from the usual one painted by Francia. The colouring is that of Francia, but the painting of the veil is somewhat different, and if it is his work we must attribute it to a late period in his career, as there is a trace of the redness in the eyes that marks his latest works. It is impossible to speak upon this picture, lovely as it is, with any degree of certainty; but on the whole I am inclined to differ from other critics, and give it to Francia, and place it towards the very close of his career.

In the Borghese Gallery is a “Madonna and Child” that is accepted by most judges, and I do not differ from them with regard to it. It recalls the “Madonna in the Rose Garden” at Munich, and in its full and flowing draperies is one of the finest pieces of painting and arrangement that Francia ever did. All the characteristics are there, and the ease and grace of the composition are excellent; but if it be accepted, then must another picture also—that in the Palazzo Mansi at Lucca—which stands or falls with it. The Mother is the same person, the Child is the same, the draperies are the same, and are as well drawn and painted as in the Borghese picture. The landscape is far more characteristic than is the one in the Borghese; the head-dress of the Madonna and the knuckleless hands are identical in each picture. The one at Lucca is every whit as good in its colouring, and is, I believe, by the same hand as the great picture in San Frediano in the same town which is signed by the artist.

Finally, there is a picture at Parma in which the

infant St. John is painted from the same child as is represented in the Barberini picture, and the wooden cross is the same, even to the cross-strings upon it. Oddly enough, the same church appears in the landscape in each work, and I think it is a church at Modena with a curious spire; but this may be only a matter of surmise, as the building is not easy to identify. The infant St. John is, however, quite clearly the same child as at Rome, and the ornament around the head-dress of the Madonna I have traced in four other pictures by Francia, used as the border of a garment. I therefore accept this picture also, even though in so doing I run counter to the opinion of various judges, whose decisions I greatly value.

"The Holy Family with St. Catherine," in the Accademia at Venice, I cannot accept, as I do not find in it the marks of Francia's work, but those of his son; and for the same reason I am unable to accept the picture at the Vatican, which is altogether different, in the landscape especially, from the work of our master. Nor can I accept the second one in the Barberini Palace, with its stiff attitude, its oddly drawn St. John, the scroll in the hand drawn as Francia never drew a scroll, and its bony fingers, so different from any by him. It is probably the work of one of his sons or a pupil.

There is at St. Petersburg another picture which belongs to this group; but I have not seen it, and can only speak of it from a photograph taken by Braun, and from the description given me by friends who have seen it, and who, like Mr. Claude Phillips, accept it as a work by Francia. The authorities at the

Hermitage Gallery accept it unhesitatingly, and they seem to have good cause for their belief. The face of the Madonna, her hands, the hands of the Child, the landscape with its trees, and the events that are taking place in the sky, are all characteristic, as well as the fact that in the two groups in the background—representing the Resurrection and Ascension—there is not one ear to be seen in the entire group of persons. The Child is evidently drawn from the same child used as a model in the Lucca, Borghese, and Taylor groups, and the attitude is the same as that in the Taylor picture. On the whole, the picture may be accepted as genuine, although it has, I hear, been very much restored, and signed with a signature which differs in lettering from the usual signature and appears to have been added at a later time.

There is one other picture of the Madonna and Child quite different from either of those already named, which is to be found in the Church of St. Dominic in Bologna, about which it is desirable to say something. It is quite a small picture, and is over the altar of the third chapel on the right. The picture has had special sanctity attributed to it, as at the altar certain important works have been wrought; and therefore metal crowns have been attached to the heads of the Mother and Child, and the painting enclosed in a glass reliquary, which prevents its being properly seen unless the door of the reliquary is opened. I believe it to be a genuine work by Francia of an early date, but in very bad condition. The hands, so far as they can be seen, are the chief reasons for my opinion, as they are characteristic; but it is almost impossible to be

definite in the matter, owing to the great difficulties that surround the attempt at close and careful examination of the picture.

We now come to the famous "Baptism of Christ" at Dresden, dated 1509 (Plate XXXIII.). It is not known how this work came into the possession of the authorities of the gallery, nor even whether it is correctly described as the "Baptism," which Vasari names as taken to Modena. Many of the pictures at Dresden came from Modena; but this one does not appear in the list, and the one named by Vasari may be the one now at Hampton Court of the same subject.

The two works compared with each other yield several interesting divergences. I agree with Mr. Claude Phillips in accepting both of them as genuine works by the master's own hand, and in accepting the signatures as true ones. The Dresden picture is dated 1509, as already stated; but the one at Hampton Court is far older, and is much more of a Quattro-cento work. It is not likely, as has been so well pointed out by that eminent critic, that a copyist or pupil would have reverted to an earlier and more archaic type in reproducing the Dresden picture; and yet if the one in England is not accepted as Francia's own work, that is the theory that must be taken to explain the differences between them.

The draperies of the picture at Hampton Court are much more metallic and rigid than those at Dresden; the grouping is stiffer and more constrained; the expression on the faces is more formal, and has a harder and harsher character about it, while especially the face and attitude of St. John is of a far older and less supple and graceful type than appears in the Dresden picture.



Hanfstängl photo

Dresden Gallery

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

PLATE XXXIII

The picture in Hampton Court originally belonged to Charles I., and was in the Mantuan Collection which the King acquired, and in the original catalogue is described as "*di mano del Franza.*" It is not in good condition, and the sky had been much damaged, so that the Heavenly Dove can be but slightly seen; but it has every characteristic of the early work of Francia, and the remarkable confirmation which it affords to the niello print, and which the print gives to it, has been already mentioned.

The Dresden picture is a notable late work. The faces have acquired that grace and sweetness that Francia was so well able to produce; the draperies lack the crumpled metallic folds that mark the niello stage; the bushy trees contrast with the finer ones in the regular fashion; and the effect of the light on the water, which is so marked a characteristic of the Hampton Court picture, in this one has assumed an even greater importance, and is treated with much skill and effect. The cartellino on each work, and the formation of the letters of the signature, are characteristic in each case. Crowe states that in the collection of Lord Taunton at Stoke there was a predella of the same subject, and that part of it was the work of a pupil; this picture now belongs to Mr. Edward Stanley, M.P., and is at Quantock Lodge.

Of the next two dated pictures it is not easy to give so definite an opinion. The one in the possession of Lord Northbrook, representing "*The Holy Family with St. Anthony,*" is certainly signed in full with the usual signature, and dated MDXII; but in many ways the picture does not resemble the work of Francia. The

colouring is deeper, denser, and heavier in tone than his; and the work of the painting is strikingly unequal, as the landscape is very different in character from that of the figures. It has been attributed to the son of Francia—Giacomo; but the date is a difficulty in that theory, as no works by Giacomo have yet been found of an earlier date than 1518, while this one is dated in unmistakable manner and in contemporary lettering 1512.

On the whole, the result of my very careful examination of the picture is to give it to Francia; and my belief is that it has been painted by the artist on a panel which he had commenced at an earlier stage in his career, and then laid aside, but that the panel came in for the purpose of this painting, and was therefore used as it was.

The course was not an unusual one for an Italian artist to follow, and in this case would explain the striking divergence between the style of the landscape and that of the figures.

The hands are specially characteristic of Francia, and also the attitudes of St. Joseph and St. Anthony, while the cleaning and restoring that has in earlier days befallen the picture will account, I think, for the complex character of the colouring.

The picture dated 1514 is at Bologna in the Ercolani Collection, but for some unknown reason cannot at present be seen. It is a small half-length, representing "God the Father Almighty," and has upon it a long inscription, telling the names of those who commissioned it in 1514.

It resembles a similar picture which is to be found in the Ambrosiana Gallery, and is there called a "Doctor

of the Church," but which is, I think, the panel from the upper part of some altar-piece, representing "God the Father."

Earlier than this time was painted, I think, the standing figure of a saint in the Poldi-Pezzoli Gallery in Milan, which, like the one in the Northbrook picture, is called "St. Anthony of Padua."

Other critics have called this sweet figure by the name of "St. Francis"; but, as I have pointed out in other pictures, there are no signs of the stigmata, and St. Francis is always represented by Francia as bearing a cross of wood, whereas this saint has a tall lily in his hand, and therefore, I conceive, is rightly called "St. Anthony." The position of the hands with the book recalls at once that of both the Ambrosiana picture and the one in the Ercolani Gallery.

It is far more difficult to assign the true date to the "Crucifixion" in the Louvre, which was painted for St. Job's Church in Bologna, as to the early history of which I have been quite unable to ascertain any documental evidence. The use of the scroll in this work, which bears the words upon it *MAJORA SVSTINVIT IPSE*, makes it appear an early work done prior to the arrival of Julius II.; but the treatment of the faces, the anguish which is given to the expressions, the garb of the Blessed Virgin, and the treatment of the draperies, all forbid such a contention.

The picture is, however, very different from the group of fine pictures which were painted in the few years now under our survey, and, but for the full, luscious painting, might well be given to an early date.

At Ferrara Francia painted the altar-piece which is

called by the Ferrarese "The Picture of all the Saints," and which represents the Coronation of the Virgin.

The treatment of the main event, which takes place in the sky, is much the same as in the picture at Lucca, which it at once recalls; but owing to the instructions of the donors of the picture, who appear to have desired the introduction of a number of saints, the picture lacks the attractive simplicity that gives so much charm to the one at Lucca.

The dedication of the Duomo to All Saints, and the fact that this picture was to stand over the altar of All Saints, where it still remains, accounts for the anxiety of the Canons who ordered it to have so many introduced on the scene; but the picture is crowded, and although a delightful piece of colouring, and a well-drawn and well-arranged composition, is unsatisfactory for this cause. It hangs in a bad light, and is therefore difficult to see.

Two scrolls also appear in this picture—one in the hand of St. John the Baptist, and the other at the feet of the Virgin.

The presence of the little child on the ground is quite unusual in a composition of Francia's, and there must have been some special reason to account for it.

The only other crowded composition that Francia painted is "The Adoration of the Magi" (Plate XXXIX.) which is now at Dresden; but in this picture we see an influence which will involve our deferring its consideration to another chapter, when the effect of Raphael's work is specially considered.

It is well, therefore, to group together the four great pictures which remain for consideration, and which



Hanfstängl photo

National Gallery, London

THE "BUONVISI" ALTAR-PIECE

represent the consummation of the work of Francia, his greatest achievements, and the fullest expression of his power.

Of two of this group we know the dates, as the pictures at Parma and Turin are both dated 1515; and it is evident that the Pietà in the National Gallery and the one at Parma belong to the same period.

The great altar-piece in London (Plates XXXIV. and XXXV.), which is one of the chief treasures of our national collection, and by which Francia is best known, is in every way a masterpiece.

It was painted for the Buonvisi Chapel in the Church of San Frediano in Lucca. This chapel was founded by Benedetto, the son of Lorenzo Buonvisi, in 1510, and Benedetto's will, which is dated August 16, 1510, provides for the maintenance of the chapel by landed property, and speaks of the sons of Paolo Buonvisi, the favourite brother of the founder, as his eventual heirs.

Benedetto died before 1516, and at Lucca, in the manuscript volumes written by a certain Canon Vincenzo Baroni, which contain a vast amount of curious information as to the city, is a brief abstract of his will. The object of the foundation of the chapel was the welfare of the souls of the Buonvisi family, and it was specially dedicated to St. Anne.

These facts account, I think, for the presence of the various saints whom Francia has introduced into his picture. St. Anne appears in so prominent a position as the special patron of the chapel; St. Laurence as the patron of the father of the founder; St. Paul as the patron of the founder's brother and heir; St. Sebastian as the plague saint, as in 1510 the city of Lucca was

visited by the fell disease, and prayers would doubtless be offered for the intercession of that saint ; and the last of the four saints, who is termed St. Romuald in the National Gallery catalogue, is probably St. Benedict, the patron of the founder.

It was this last saint which puzzled me when first I examined the picture, and started me upon an investigation as to its history. I was able to find but little when I visited Lucca as to the history of the saint, but thanks to the kindness of Baron Acton and my good friend Mr. Montgomery Carmichael the information just narrated has been discovered.

There is no special sign distinguishing the saint as St. Romuald, and in fact the usual crutch is wanting, his beard is not as long as St. Romuald's is usually represented, and the cowl and habit in which he is garbed differ in many ways from those worn in the sixteenth century by the Camaldolese monks.

The habit, on the other hand, is Benedictine, and the figure in all respects resembles the older monastic representations of St. Benedict, while the introduction of this saint would occur in the most natural manner.

The Duke of Lucca acquired the picture from the last of the Buonvisi, a Princess Elisa Poniatowski (*née* Montecatini), and, on the sale of the Duke's effects, it was brought to London.

In this picture there is no sign of crowding. The Virgin and Child are enthroned together, side by side with St. Anne, in a manner that is quite unusual in Italian pictures, and at once recalls the picture by Perugino at Marseilles. At the foot of the throne is a joyous St. John bearing the customary scroll of which



Hausfängel photo

THE LUNETTE FOR THE "BUONVISI" ALTAR-PIECE

National Gallery, London

PLATE XXXV

Francia is so fond, and the pavement on which all the saints stand is copied from that in the church itself for which the picture was intended.

The most notable part, however, of the picture is the lunette (Plate XXXV.), representing the dead body of our Lord supported by His mother and by two angels, and here is the fullest expression of the genius for pathos that Francia possessed to so great a degree in these later years.

There is no finer representation of the dread scene to be found in the whole range of Italian art. There is nothing in which pathos and sublimity are so happily blended, and in which there are no distracting elements to be considered.

Here in this picture there are but four figures, transfigured with pity, overcome with grief, disconsolate, and absorbed.

The two angels, however, to whose presence the eyes of the Virgin seem to be closed, have faces full of hope. They are overwhelmed with astonishment at the death of their Master, and adore His sacred Body; but they are at the same time convinced that death is not the end, and that there is life beyond, and consequently the light of hope spreads itself over their countenances.

On the Blessed Body itself there are no marks of suffering or pain, and there is no obtrusive horror or sign of torment, but just the sublimity of a death-like sleep, with the sense of resting peace that such a scene often presents.

Francia has in this picture passed quite away from the goldsmith stage. He is the painter of Divine things,

and has by his genius touched the very heights of a world's masterpiece, and presented a scene that will move even the most callous of mortals to tears.

In neither of his other representations of the same scene does he quite reach this position, partly because in each there are so many other spectators, and the loneliness and simplicity of the scene are lost.

In the Turin picture (Plate XXXVI.) there are no angels, but in their place there are two holy women, who support the dead Christ, while beside them stand the figures of St. Joseph and St. Anthony, both of them, by the dramatic action of their hands, intruding somewhat upon the sublimity of the conception. There is an overstrained look of sweetness and resignation in the face of the Saviour, astonishment rather than grief in the gaze of St. Joseph, and horror and surprise in the appearance of the women. The picture falls far short of the one from Lucca.

Much finer is the Parma picture (Plate XXXVII.), although here again it is spoiled by the energetic action of one holy woman, who comes flying on to the scene with hands outspread, and a look of mild astonishment on her face, and by the nervous manner of St. Joseph, who stands close by.

Had we not seen the Buonvisi altar-piece we should have pronounced this one, with its great dark cross filling the air, its rocky landscape, the tender face of the Virgin Mother, the bewildering grief of the two women, and the passive, tranquil Body, supported by their hands, as one of the best representations of this favourite scene ever painted; but as it is we can admire it without the depth of emotion that the other



Brogi photo

THE DEPOSITION, 1515

Turin Gallery

PLATE XXXVI

produces, and turn to the one in our own National Gallery as to the truer and finer expression of tender grief and loving hope.

One more work remains for examination, and that is the other one at Parma (130) (Plate XXXVIII.), which bears the same date as the Turin "Deposition," 1515, and was therefore one of the latest pictures painted by Francia. This altar-piece, which was, so tradition states, the last picture that Francia painted, was done for the Black Friars of the Annunziata of Parma, whose church was destroyed in 1566. The altar-piece was then removed to a new church in Capo-di-Ponte, and there it remained till the first year of the eighteenth century, when it was sold to Count Carlo Sanvitale for the adornment of his gallery. On the dispersal of that gallery it became the property of one Antonio Orlandi, from whom, in 1834, it was acquired for the gallery at Parma, where now it hangs.

It is in excellent condition, and a very fine work.

The saints represented are St. Scholastica, with a dove and a book on the right, and near to her St. Placidus, who was held in such honour in Parma, and who is wearing a cope with a richly jewelled morse and orphreys, and carries in his hand a crosier.

On the left are Sta. Giustina, with the dagger in her breast, wearing a crown and carrying a palm, and near to her a fine figure of St. Benedict, whose rule the brothers followed. He also is robed in a cope of rich brocade, with Francia's favourite pine pattern on it, and carries in his hand a crosier.

Around the neck of Sta. Giustina is a fine necklace of stones set in delightful gold-work.

In many ways the picture recalls the very earliest work of the artist, transfigured by his greater knowledge and the full effect of his genius. There is also the same love of jewels and of delicate decoration. There is the use of a scroll, which appears in the hand of the infant St. John, who is seated at the foot of the throne, and on the throne itself there is the same kind of dainty decoration as the artist used in the Manzuoli altar-piece.

That there should be no mistake as to which saints are depicted in the picture, he has reverted to the plan he adopted in the altar-piece at Lucca, and added their names at the feet of each figure, and, to give completeness to the effect, has placed his mitre by the side of each Bishop. There is the same contrast between the bushy and the silhouetted trees, and in the arches that are at the back of the Madonna he has used the arrangement which appears in the National Gallery altar-piece, to which this one has great affinities in many ways.

The profound genius of the artist is to be seen in the ineffable sweetness of the faces, which never approach in expression mere sentimentality, and are not oversweet as they might have become in the hands of a weaker man. The draperies are full and easy, and the colouring is of the deepest, richest, and most melting quality, with tender depth, and producing a delightful effect. Quite notable is the face of the Virgin, and equally important that of St. Benedict, one of the most dignified figures which the artist ever painted. Gone for ever is the hard hand of the niellist, and the somewhat stagey effect of early work, and in their place is the full fruit of the genius of the artist.



Alinari photo

THE DEPOSITION

Parma Gallery

CHAPTER VII

SOME NEW DOCUMENTS ABOUT FRANCIA

IN the Archiginnasio Library there is a series of volumes of manuscript bearing the following title: "Notizie de Professori del Disegno cive Pittori, Scultori ed Architetti Bolognesi e de Forestieri di sua scuola raccolte ed in piu tomi divisi," by Marcello Oretti, "Bolognese Accad. del Institu. della Scienze di Bologna."

My attention was drawn to these books by the Chief Librarian when I was working in the library, and on examining them I found that they contained a large amount of interesting information.

They appear to have been compiled by Oretti as a sort of commonplace book, in which he has put down with the greatest care every scrap of information that he could gather as to the Bolognese artists, copying his notes from papers, deeds, and documents that he came across, and also gathering up all the information from his friends that he could find as to his favourite subject.

The volumes do not bear any date, but from internal information I judge that they were in course of construction during a prolonged period; and as Oretti is said to have died at a great age (over ninety years), it is probable that they were the work of his life, and occupied much of his leisure time. I place their compilation

between the years 1640 and 1740, and am unable to ascertain nearer than that their approximate date.

Under each artist Oretti gives in the first place a careful bibliography, marking not only the very edition that he has used of each book, but the very page, and in some instances, in the case of folio books, the very line in which the reference to the artist appears.

This list he follows by a list of the works of the artist as far as he is acquainted with them, adding information that he has gathered up about the picture that he names.

Much of this list it is important to give, as it records the pictures which in Oretti's time were given to Francia. It is well to mention at once that Oretti is very careful to distinguish between Francesco Francia and Giulio and Giacomo, who followed him, and he gives a list of the works of the two latter men quite separately from the one he gives of the master, attributing to the two sons most of the works now ascribed to them, and considering them far less worthy of notice than Francia himself. I mention this as the question may be raised whether Oretti has not confused the three men in his lists, the reply to which is that he has taken very evident care to keep them apart, and that the pictures which he gives to Francia are those which he considers should rightly belong to that master.

In Bologna he gives the following works to Francia :

San Stefano : A Crucifixion with Mary Magdalen and St. Francis.

Santa Teckla in the Sacristy : A Virgin and Child with St. Peter and Sta. Teckla, dated 1496.

- San Domenico: A Blessed Virgin and Child.
 Della Morte: The Painter and St. Roch.
 San Petronio: A Crucifixion with St. Francis only.
 San Tommaso: A Fresco of Our Lady in the Portico.
 San Paolo: A Madonna on the Tabernacle.
 San Girolamo, Via di Bagno: A Virgin and Child with St. John the Baptist.
 San Lorenzo: Madonna and Two Saints.
 Hospital of St. Francis: Madonna, St. Francis, and St. Anthony of Padua.
 Palazzo Boschi: Portrait of Francia like the one sent to Raphael.

There are also pictures by the artist, he states, in the following palaces: Albegari, Caji, Bolognini, Boncompagni, Bentivoglio, Bianchi. Cospi (Presentation in the Temple), Gozzadini, Girolami, Guavi, Guadavillani, Lambertini (portraits of that family), Malvasia, Pepoli, Sampieri, Riarvi, Scappi, Zani, and Zambeccari.

Of pictures in other cities he records the following:

- Cesena—Santo Spirito: A Madonna.
 Cremona—St. Lorenzo: First chapel (left), Madonna and Child. St. Joseph's Chapel, San Giuseppe.

St. Monica: Virgin with Child, and with St. John the Evangelist and St. Augustine.

Dresden: Adoration of the Kings.

Ferrara—Capuchin Church: Madonna on Foot contemplating the Child in a Rose Garden.

San Sylvestro: Madonna and Child.

San Benedetto's Refectory: A Marriage of Cana.

Santa Maria degli Angeli: St. Catherine of Siena, and a portrait of Alessandro Farussini and Caterina Macchiavelli, his mother.

Della Scala: Christ dead in the Arms of His Mother, with St. John, St. Francis, and St. Mary Magdalene.

San Salvatore: St. Roch, St. Sebastian, and the Madonna.

Mantua—Convent of St. Ursula: Virgin adoring the Child (from the Apartment of the Duchess Margharita Gonzaga).

Milan—Casa Pertusati: Blessed Virgin and St. Francis, signed "Francia aurifaber Bono."

Modena—Carmelite Church: Picture of St. Albert, the Carmelite, given by the Duke Francesco Maria d' Urbino; also A Baptism.

Church of St. Cabaldo (?) fuori di Citta: An Annunciation and Madonna after his predella (? correct, as writing is not clear).

Parma—San Giovanni Monaco (a Benedictine Church): The Dead Christ. Ducal Palace Garden, A Madonna.

Reggio—San Pietro: A Madonna.

Carmine Church: St. Alberto.

Spirito Church: Another picture.

Rome—Casa Pamphilici: Madonna with little St. John.

Casa Guiesti: Mary Magdalene.

Casa Sacchetti: A picture.

Widow Ludomisia: Two pictures in two rooms.

There are also pictures in the Palazzi Spada, Colonna, and Giustiniani, and there is his own portrait in Rome which he sent to Raphael.

Urbino: Lucrezia.

Of the pictures at Bologna, those in the churches of San Stefano and Santa Teckla cannot be traced. The latter church is no longer in existence, and of the picture, which would be most interesting, I can hear nothing.

The one in San Domenico is the picture, in all probability, upon which the metal crowns have been placed, and which is named on p. 105. The ones in Della Morte, San Petronio, San Tommaso, and San Paolo, cannot be found at present. San Paolo has been entirely restored since Oretti wrote. The one named in the Church of San Girolamo, now no longer in existence, may be either the group in the Barberini Palace or the similar one at Parma, probably not the latter (see p. 104). The Madonna and two saints at San Lorenzo is the picture that now hangs in the Hermitage Gallery at St. Petersburg, which is known to have come from that church (see Plate XX.).

There is a picture of the Madonna with St. Francis and St. Anthony now in the Accademia in Florence, about which there has been some considerable controversy. Most critics, including the custodians of the gallery, give it to the school of Francia rather than to the master himself; but from this attribution I am disposed to differ, especially as it is clear that this picture was once in Bologna. It certainly differs in many ways from the style and colouring of Francia, but in more ways has a close resemblance to his work. The face of the Madonna can be found in two of his accepted works, the Child in three, the face of St. Anthony in one, and that of St. Francis in two. The draperies are those of Francia, and, although the landscape is not very characteristic, yet it closely resembles that of "The Adoration" at Bologna; and, on the whole, I am inclined to find in this picture the one that Oretti names.

The portraits of Francia, to which reference will be made in Chapter IX., are, unfortunately, no longer to

be found, unless they are known under other names; but it is clear that Oretti believed in the tradition, related by Malvasia, as to Francia sending his portrait to Raphael, since he twice refers to the portrait—once in this passage, and again when he records the pictures in Rome.

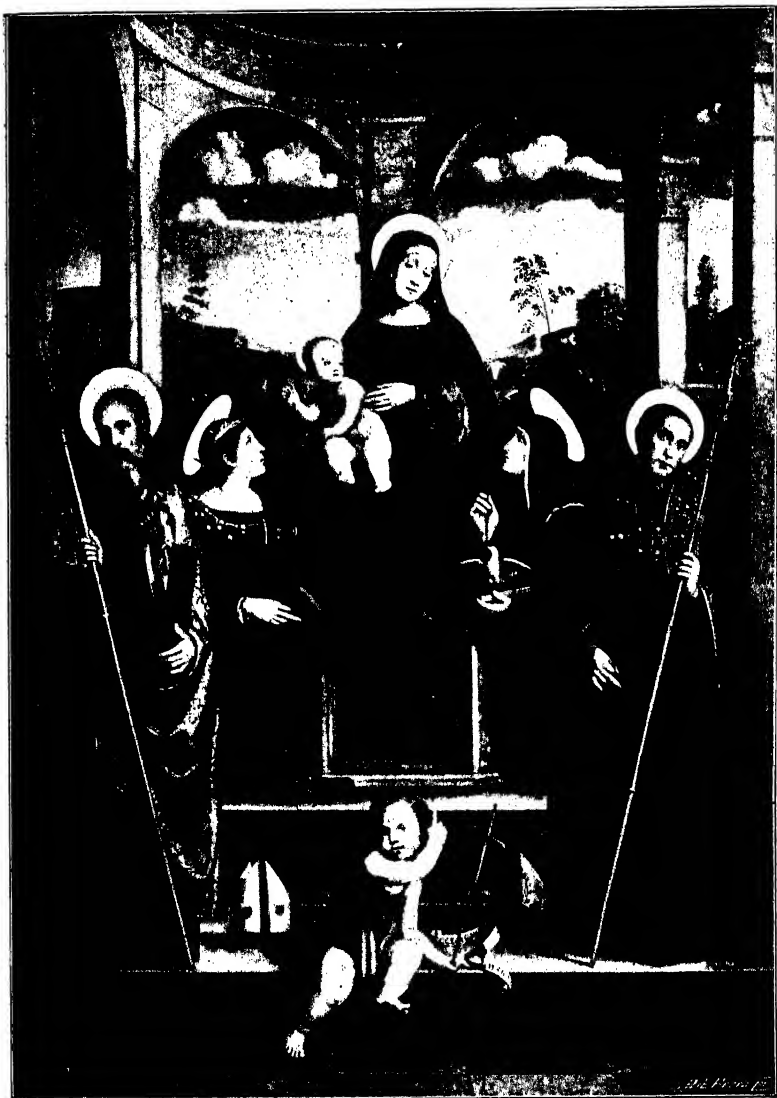
It is also quite clear that he accepts Francia as a portrait-painter to a far fuller extent than he has lately been accepted.

I have not been able to trace the history of either of the pictures that Oretti gives at Cremona, although there is a local tradition that there was a work by the artist in the San Giuseppe Chapel in the cathedral, and that building had San Lorenzo as one of its patron saints.

In the picture-gallery at Cesena there is a small picture that might possibly be the one to which Oretti alludes. The Dresden picture we know (Plate XXXIX.).

The first picture named at Ferrara is evidently the one now in Munich.

The one named in the Church of Della Scala may possibly be "The Deposition" now at Turin, dated 1515; but in that case the saint, whom I style St. Anthony, and who is called by the custodians in Turin St. Albert the Carmelite, must be St. Francis if Oretti is right. I do not believe him to be St. Albert, as there is no sign of the dragon under his feet, and he is not represented as St. Albert is, but carries a lily, usually borne in Francia's pictures by St. Anthony; but it is quite possible that it may be St. Francis. The early history of the Turin picture is not very clear, nor how it got to Casale, whence it came to Turin.



Alinari photo

THE PARMA ALTAR-PIECE, 1515

Parma Gallery

The other pictures at Ferrara it would indeed be delightful to find, especially the one with the donor and his mother. The Convent of San Benedetto has now been turned into barracks, and there is no trace of any work such as Oretti names to be found in it. "The Marriage" would very possibly have been a fresco-painting.

The picture named in Milan was in the palace of the Pertusati family until quite a recent date, but now I am unable to hear what has become of it.

Of the Modena pictures, I take it that "The Baptism" is the one now in Dresden, which is said to have come from that city, but which does not appear in the list of works acquired from Modena which is now in Dresden. As it is evident that there was a "Baptism" in Modena, and as tradition has always said that the one in Dresden came from that city, even although it may not be mentioned in the list, I am disposed to think that Oretti's statement may be taken to settle the question.

The Carmelite picture I have already (see p. 74) stated is, in my opinion, the one at Chantilly.

I am not clear what is Oretti's meaning about the other picture, "The Annunciation," nor can I at present find out to which church he alludes.

At Parma it is satisfactory to find allusion to the fine "Deposition" still in the gallery, and probably the "Madonna," which is also named, is the one that hangs near it in the same gallery.

It is natural to consider the one that Oretti states was at Mantua as the one now in the Munich Gallery, which is always said to have come from the Gonzaga

family into the possession of the Empress Josephine, and thence into the Munich Gallery; but this one is so well described by Oretti as in Ferrara, that the matter becomes one of some doubt as to which of the two entries must be taken as referring to the Munich picture. I am disposed to give the Ferrara one the preference, and to look further for the picture out of the Convent of St. Ursula. No pictures can now be traced in Reggio, and, with regard to Rome, the information is of too slight a character to enable a search to be made with much chance of success. The Urbino picture, which Vasari says was painted for Duke Guido Baldo, is said to have been at one time in the Borghese Gallery, and to have been numbered 64; but it is there no longer. Lord Northbrook has a fine picture of this subject, which is evidently of the school of Francia, if not by the artist, and there is a still finer one in the National Gallery of Ireland. It is quite possible that this is the one named by Oretti.

In addition to this list of the works of the master, Oretti gives odd scraps of information as to Francia when he refers to other artists connected with Bologna in his portly volumes.

Thus, with reference to Perugino, he speaks of the "Virgin and Child in Glory" in the Church of San Giovanni-in-Monte, which is now to be found in the Pinacoteca, and also of the "Assumption" in the Church of San Martino Maggiore, respecting which some critics have doubted whether or not it should be given to Perugino at all. The latter, he says, hangs in the Orsi Chapel, and he also speaks of another work by Perugino; a Presepio, which is not now in the city.

He, however, records the fact—important in its bearing upon Francia—of Perugino coming to Bologna to receive the instructions for the pictures for San Giovanni-in-Monte; and again in 1499, that he might superintend the placing of the picture, and so, indirectly, he not only dates this fine work—which in my book on “Perugino” I had given to about 1496—but also sets at rest the question of Perugino coming to the place where Francia was, and makes the chances of these two artists having met so much the more probable (see pp. 40, 41). He tells us that the “Virgin in Glory” that Perugino painted was for the Vizzani Chapel in San Giovanni-in-Monte, which is also a new piece of information.

Another manuscript in Bologna, by one Amorini, gives a few more detached pieces of information.

It states that the artist who made the frame for the Bentivoglio altar-piece in San Giacomo Maggiore was named Andrea Formigini. It states that the picture at Reggio of the “Madonna and Saints,” which is probably the one that Oretti says was in the Church of San Pietro, was done for Benedictines, and has Benedictine saints in it.

It further states that in the Church of Santa Maria del Monte, outside the walls of Cesena, there was painted for the Benedictines an altar-piece of great beauty, and there certainly is a picture in that church which might answer to his description; but I cannot believe that it is by Francia, and am disposed to think that reference is intended to the “Presentation in the Temple,” which now hangs in the gallery, and which was commissioned by Benedictines. A Life of Francia issued in 1841 by

another person named Amorini gives some reference to the picture now at St. Petersburg, with "St. Laurence and St. Jerome," but contains no new information as to it. It was painted for San Lorenzo in Bologna in 1501.

In the original records of the Guilds, I found the mention of Francia's matriculation as a goldsmith recorded thus: "1482.—Francesco de Maurus de Raibolino 10 X" (perhaps the tenth of the tenth month); and again further on, when he took office in the Guild, the fact is thus stated: "1486.—Francesco Marco de Raibolino Congr. S. Niccolo e S. Felice" (referring to where he resided) "detto il Pittore il Franza." There are also the entries as to the matriculation of his sons to be seen in the same book.

In a paper about the Mint at Bologna I found two entries—one stating in very lengthy form that in November, 1506, the painter Francia was Master of the Mint, by the seal of Pope Julius II.; and the other recording that "on November 27, 1508, Messer Franza the painter and engraver of metals of all sorts was Master of the Mint by the will of the Pope."

There are also records of his appointment as Gonfaloniere del Popolo and Tribuni della Plebe on December 10, 1482; and, lastly, the two entries of the death of the painter to which Calvi alludes, one of which simply records that Francia died in 1517, as follows: "1517 a di Gennaro mori Francesc Francia orefice e pittore eccellente"; the other, which is the Seccadinari record, reads: "1517—7 Gennaro mori Messer Francesco Francia miglior orefice d' Italia et buonissimo pittore, bravissimo giojelliere, bellissimo di persona et eloquentissimo, benche fosse filiuolo di un

falegname, della cappella di Santa Caterina di Saragozza."

Such are the pieces of information that have rewarded my search in Bologna—those relating to the Gozzadini predella and the Chantilly picture having been already mentioned. There are, however, a large number of other manuscripts that should reward the diligent searcher who is possessed of unlimited time; and in the Oretti volumes alone there are quantities of important records relating to all the Bolognese painters, with, in some cases, extracts from their own letters, copies of their signatures, and even, in a few instances, autograph letters of the later men bound in with the pages. It would be a praiseworthy task to reprint the whole of the series of volumes for the use of students, and one quite worthy of the attention of a Government, or of some wealthy lover of literature and art.

CHAPTER VIII

THE INFLUENCE OF RAPHAEL

THE school which Francia gathered about him towards the latter part of his life was one of the most notable and popular that the records of Italian art reveal.

He is said to have had as many as 200 pupils, and the names of a large number of them are recorded.

It is the presence of all these pupils, and especially of the sons of Francia, that renders the task of determining which pictures were painted by the master one of such delicacy and hardship.

Notable amongst these pupils was Timoteo Viti, who entered the bottega in July, 1490, as Francia himself records in a note-book which Malvasia saw, but which does not appear to be now in existence. The entry is to the following effect :

"1490, July.—Timoteo Viti da Urbino was taken into our bottega. He will receive no salary during the first year, and 66 florins for three months during the second."

In 1491 another entry records the settlement of accounts with Timoteo, and mentions that he has been passed on into the studio where the other artists are at work, as he was desirous of becoming one himself.

Then, finally, we have the entry recorded :

"1495, April 4.—My beloved Timoteo left us. God grant that all blessings and good fortune may be with him."

It is impossible to vouch for the accuracy of these entries, inasmuch as the originals are not now available ; but they are quoted as genuine by successive historians of Bologna, and may well be so. Timoteo went, it is said, from Francia to Raphael, and Francia, if the words of his note-book are genuine, speaks of Timoteo in a way in which one would speak of a young man. But, notwithstanding this, there are certain critics, for whose opinion I have a profound regard, who insist on the influence that this youthful Timoteo had upon Raphael when both of them lived in Urbino. Into so vexed a question I shall not enter in these pages, especially as in this matter I am, to my regret, obliged to part company with the critics to whom I have alluded, considering that there is too little evidence of such influence to justify the position that they take up.

As to the influence of Raphael upon Francia, it must, I think, be accepted, and there is no reason to doubt the friendship that existed between the two painters, which is so often mentioned in the Bolognese records and accepted by the chroniclers of the city as a matter that admits of no doubt.

To go a step further and accept as genuine the letter that Malvasia gives in his "Felsina Pittrice," and the sonnet written by Francia, both of which he claims to have discovered in the Lambertini papers, is another matter.

Both are very interesting, and reveal a delightful spirit of affection existing between two men, who were so similar in their art; but the originals have never been produced, nor has any other historian than Malvasia, who was notoriously anxious to say all he

could to extol the artists of Bologna, ever named them.

Vasari certainly tells us in very definite manner that the two artists "saluted each other by letters," and the fact is not an improbable one, but to accept that does not imply an acceptance of the letters printed by Malvasia.

Later critics have stated that the style of these letters is not that of the sixteenth century, and it is certainly a somewhat mysterious fact that letters written by so great an artist as Raphael should never have been produced, and that no other historian should have heard of them.

It seems to be clear that Raphael did send his picture of St. Cecilia to Bologna to the care of Francia, and asked him to see to its erection in the chapel for which it was intended, and that Francia, as Vasari tells us, executed this commission with great delight for his friend; but the conclusion of the story which Vasari tells (with some doubt in his words), that the sight of this picture filled Francia with astonishment and so disturbed his mind as to cause his death, is too foolish to be even entertained. Such stories are often to be found in the annals of art, and there is no evidence whatever to support this one any more than others.

Not one word as to such grievous disappointment causing the death of the artist appears in either of the records of his death, nor is such a statement breathed by any of the writers of Bologna, or by those who mentioned Francia, save in the pages of Vasari.

There is a tradition that he died of apoplexy, and that his death was very sudden, and it is quite possible that the exertion consequent upon the reception and



Hauptstängel photo

hanging of his friend's picture may have had something to do with his death, and so given rise to the fable. But Francia was not the sort of man to die at the sight of another man's picture, even were it the finest that Raphael ever painted, and certainly not at the sight of this St. Cecilia, which can never have been a world's masterpiece, but was ever one of the less noteworthy pictures of the great painter of Urbino.

All the Bolognese historians accept, without a shadow of doubt, the statement that the two artists exchanged portraits, and speak, as does Oretti, of the portrait sent to Rome, and of the replica of it that was retained in Bologna.

This latter was in the Palazzo Boschi, and Oretti says the figure held a ring in the hand, but neither of the portraits attributed to either Francia or Raphael come up to this description.

It is quite possible that such portraits were painted, and that information may yet be found which will enable them to be identified, but at present nothing can be said as to them.

That the influence of Raphael is to be found in the work of Francia will, I think, be readily granted, for in the grouping of his figures, in the ruddiness of his flesh, the glossy sharpness of contrasting tints, and the clear outlines, the later work of our master has much affinity with the later Madonnas of Raphael.

In "The Adoration of the Magi," which is now in Dresden (Plate XXXIX.), the grouping of Raphael is to be very clearly noted. The very arrangement of the picture is Raphaelesque, and the drawing of the horse and the attitude of the Holy Family recalls the Umbrian

influence, even if the landscape were not there to proclaim loudly the same origin.

The love of detail is, however, to be seen in this work as in all the rest. Francia painted the golden gifts, the necklaces around the necks of the Magi, the ornaments of the servants and the jewels in their turbans, as a goldsmith enamoured of his craft would do, and yet with it all is so careful never to allow mere ornament to usurp a place that does not belong to it, but keeps it under restraint in the most judicious manner.

There is little else that has to be said about the life of Francia. He married, we know, and his wife's name was Caterina, and her family name is believed to have been Baldi, although some Bolognese writers affirm that she was a sister of his great friend, Polo Zambecaro. We have heard that he had two sons, Giacomo and Giulio, the latter of whom was born in 1487. We have heard of his friends Zambeccari, Achillini, Gambare, and Casio. We know of his admission to the Guild of Goldsmiths, where afterwards he reigned as master, and we have seen the entry of his election to the office of Gonfaloniere. We hear of him reigning as master in 1514 over the entire body of Guilds of Bologna, chief of all the craftsmen of the place, and we have seen how many pupils gathered around him for instruction. The names of Marcantonio Raimondi, of Innocenza da Imola, of Bartolommeo Ramenghi, of his own two sons, and of Timoteo Viti, will hand down the memory of that school to future times; and finally we come to the entry of his death, and to the striking words that are written of his character by the chronicler Seccadinari.

It is not known where he was buried, but he is believed to lie in the Church of San Francesco, or in its cloister near to the tomb which is now occupied by the remains of his son Giacomo.

There is no monument to be found of him in that church or cloister, but the words of the historian who recorded his death, and the fame of the paintings that he executed, are sufficient to insure that his memory will always live in the world of art, and his name be handed down as one of the great masters of that wonderful Renaissance period in Italy.

CHAPTER IX

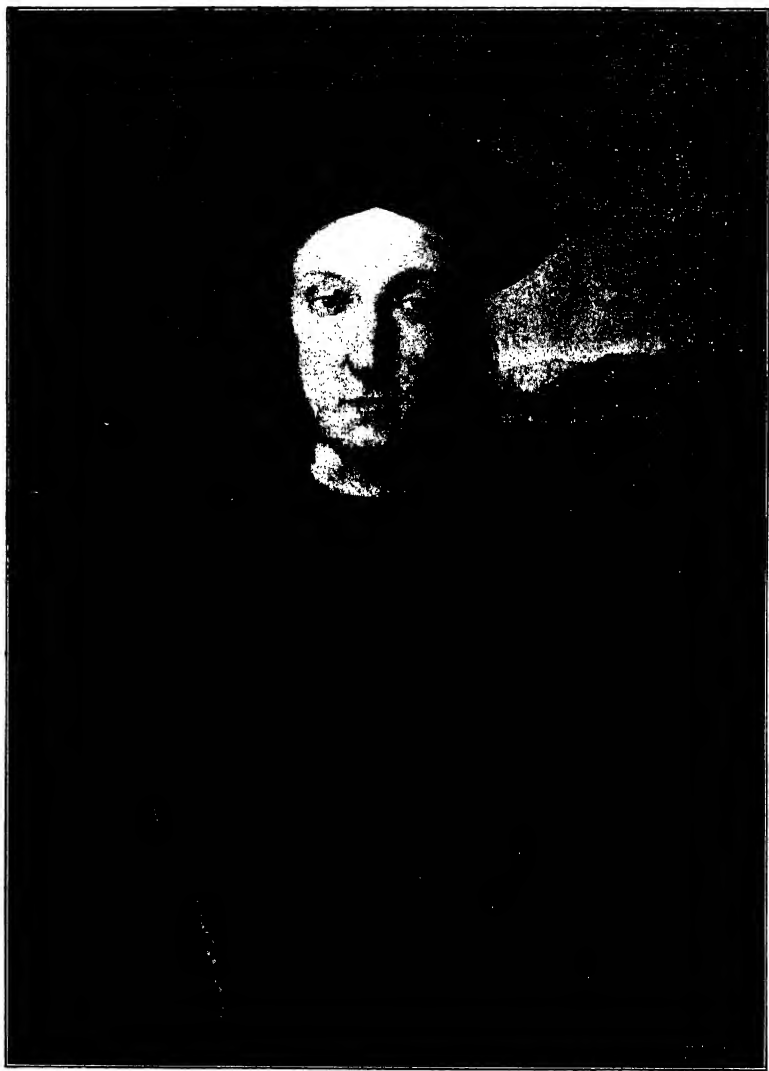
FRANCIA AS A PORTRAIT PAINTER

IT is, I think, clear from the many references that are made by Bolognese writers to the portraits painted by Francia, and to their excellence and beauty, that the artist was considered by his fellows to be of great repute as a portrait painter, and that more portraits should be ascribed to him than we are at first inclined to suppose.

Oretti, as has already been seen, credits Francia with many important portraits, and names several in his list in addition to those which he painted of himself for Raphael; but when search is made in the galleries of Europe, it will be found that very few indeed are accredited to our artist, and that of those that do bear the name of Francia, there is a note ascribing them to Giacomo rather than to his father.

Oretti expressly states that Giacomo painted very few portraits, and that Giulio did not paint more than one or two; and in this contention he is borne out by the older Amorini, whose book has remained only in manuscript, and who refers to the portraits of Francesco Francia as of very high merit and repute.

Lately it has been the habit amongst certain Italian critics to take away from Francia all the portraits already ascribed to him; but in England we have



Brogi photo

Pitti Palace Gallery, Florence

PORTRAIT OF A MAN

Scappus who commissioned the altar-piece, now at Bologna, in memory of another son (Plate XVIII.).

This particular portrait and the Bianchini portrait are very characteristic in many ways of the work of Francia. In neither of them are there any ears to be seen. In both the hair is arranged in two portions, of a somewhat lumpy style, on either side of the head; the painting of the hair is very liney in character, many of the hairs being clear and distinct, standing away from the others, and in each case the hair at its extremities has an upward turn. In each portrait are to be seen the two sorts of trees that are very distinctive of Francia—the short bushy ones, and the finer ones that are silhouetted against the sky, and painted with such particular care.

In each portrait the hands have no knuckles, the chin is soft and dimpled, and the cheeks are round and very smooth and soft.

Each holds a letter, each wears a dark jacket, and on the head of each is a black cap, and each portrait is set in a background of rocks and trees with surrounding hills, and a town in the far distance.

It will be seen, therefore, that the Bianchini and the Scappi portraits are very similar in their characteristics.

With regard to the two portraits in the Pitti Gallery (195 and 44), the case is very similar.

Each man has, like the other two, a dark cap on his head. On neither are there any ears to be seen. The hands, where they are to be seen (44), closely resemble the hands Francia loved to paint, and are soft, fleshy, and without knuckles.

The hair has all the special peculiarities of the other two portraits, not only in its position and arrangement,



Brogi photo

PORTRAIT OF A MAN

Pitti Gallery, Florence

but in the manner in which it is painted, in the way in which certain loose hairs escape from the others, and in the upward turn. The mouth in all four has the exact bow-shape, so perfectly drawn and almost too accurately curved, that is to be found in almost every full-faced picture by Francia. The eyes in all have the same quiet, reposeful, half-sleepy glance, but thoughtful, steady look, as though they were somewhat conscious of being painted. The two Pitti Gallery portraits also have many points of resemblance in costume, notably in the presence in each of a sort of chequer pattern material, which in one portrait is rose and cream in colour, and in the other black, with dark green and gold, and which also appears in three other works by Francia.

In each case there is the same background, which contains the same trees, hills, and towns, although there are no rocks in it, as in the Scappi and Bianchini portraits.

Of these two Pitti Palace portraits, one is far grander and more sumptuous than the other. The one numbered 44 is of a man in rich apparel trimmed with fur (Plate XLI.), whilst the other is of a man garbed in darker costume (Plate XL.), more serious in his habits and calling than the other. I take the latter to be a notary, as he wears the special biretta that the notaries appear to have worn in the time of Francia, and has the dark, close-fitting dress that they assumed. The other man was very possibly a rich senator.

An old list of the Pitti Gallery calls this latter one "Messer Lambertini," and if this is so, as would be very possible, seeing that the Lambertini family was one of the richest and noblest of Bologna at that time,

and that, according to Oretti, Francia did paint the portraits of that family (see his reference to them in his list of palaces containing portraits, p. 119), we have another piece of evidence not without its force as to the portrait being by Francia.

The technique of all the portraits is of such close resemblance that, if they are not all by the same man, it is evident that the painter of the two in the Pitti Gallery must have been trained by the man who did the Bianchini and Scappi portraits, and if that were the son of Francia, then the agreement would not be unlikely; but if all were by the same artist, as I contend, then there is no need to admire the dexterity with which Giacomo copied his father's technique, but to accept them all as by the same hand.

Girolamo di Casio alludes in some verses of his to two female portraits painted by Francia, but these I am quite unable to trace.*

One was, it is evident, of Ippolita, daughter of Carlo Fratello, Duke of Milan, wife of Giovanni Bentivoglio II. and mother of Alessandro Bentivoglio. This was painted for the Church of the Misericordia, and was at one time in the sacristy of that interesting building.

The care that Francia always took in painting the faces of those persons whom he introduced into his pictures proves him to have been no mean expert in this branch of his craft and fully persuaded of its value. The portraits that have now been named will

* "Et se alcun santo tu gli fai da lato,
Pingi due volte il suo divo Consorte
Che nudo fia Bastian San Giorgio armato."



Alinari photo

Uffizi Gallery, Florence

PORTRAIT OF EVANGELISTA SCAPPI

add to the weight of his importance in this direction, and will show that in portraiture he had no equal at that moment in Bologna, and was not a whit behind the very greatest masters of his craft.

Of two interesting portraits that Francia painted we have all the history in the papers and letters that relate to Isabella d'Este.

One was that of the young Prince Frederick her son, who was sent as a hostage to the Papal Court, and placed in the hands of Julius II. His affectionate mother desired to have a portrait of her boy before he left her charge, and the commission was given to Lorenzo Costa, who was at that time attached to the Court at Mantua; but it was eventually transferred to Francia. The picture was finished on August 10, 1510, and sent to Isabella, who, in a letter which she wrote to Girolamo Costa, expressed her very high appreciation of it, and her great delight at possessing it. She sent thirty ducats of gold to Francia for it, but returned the portrait to the artist, requesting him to touch the hair lightly, as it was too blond in colour.

She never received it back again, for afterwards it was sent to Rome as the father of the youthful Frederick, who was at that time at the Papal Court, desired to show the portrait to the Pope and to many of the Cardinals, and thither it went in November.

On December 12 Francia himself wrote to the Marchioness Isabella, thanking her for the thirty ducats which he had safely received from her, and for the great praise that she had bestowed on the portrait, and offering to carry out any other instructions that she might

have as to another picture which she had desired to possess for her boudoir. He signed himself "Francia, goldsmith at Bologna."

Again he wrote on January 11, 1511, respecting this same picture, and by this second letter it appears that the size and the subject of this picture had not yet been fixed.

Just at this time Lucrezia Bentivoglio had expressed a great desire to have a portrait of the Marchioness of Mantua, and that it should be painted by Francia; and the Marchioness was not unwilling to grant the request, but would have preferred that Costa should have the commission, and was evidently very anxious that no special favour should be given to Francia over that shown to his old friend, who was recognised as the painter to the Mantuan Court, for fear of annoyance to Costa, who had done such good work for Isabella in her palace.

Francia did, however, execute the required portrait, but without going to Mantua, as a visit from him to that place might have wounded the susceptibilities of Costa; and the portrait was sent home on October 25, 1511, with a letter written by Francia, signed with a Latin motto, in addition to his own signature, in the classic mannerism that he had adopted: "Nec plura vale et vivas Francia Aurifex."

Isabella acknowledged the receipt of the portrait of herself, and in her reply to Francia stated that it was more beautiful than life itself.*

Neither of these celebrated portraits can at present

* 'Havendomi vui cum l' arte vostra facta assai piu bella che non mi ha facta natura, ringratiamo vui.'

be traced. My information as to them is taken from Professor Venturi's paper in the *Archivio* for July, 1888.

Having now dealt with all the various works that can safely be ascribed to Francia, it will be well to say a few final words on his art and influence.

The influence of Francia does not appear to have extended far beyond his immediate surroundings. His school was a very large one, and he implanted his own ideas very firmly upon his pupils; but he appears neither to have been touched by the influences of pagan literature that were abroad in his time, nor to have, in his turn, sent any great movement away from Bologna in connection with his art.

He occupies a place apart. His pictures almost without exception are religious; they betray no special sympathy with the classic or humanistic movement. There is not one of them that is concerned with mythology or pagan story, but all have sacred themes as their subject.

His colouring was always rich, full, and deep. His pathos was never forced, and always assisted by the tone of his colour scheme. His earnestness and purity were very marked; his tender sympathy, religious devotion, warm-hearted acceptance of the truths of religion, and simple faith were all clear features of his life.

He was possessed of a mastery over his materials which is well shown in every branch of art with which he had to do, and is especially marked when colour is to be taken into account.

He was able to create an emotion, and to move the heart of the spectator in the direction that he

desired, whether it be that of sympathy, affection, or sadness.

He never depicted scenes of horror or intensified bodily suffering in his works; but loved to paint those passages of pure affection, of deep love, of tender pathos, of adoring reverence, or of aspiring hope, in which his heart rejoiced.

He takes a place towards the close of the Renaissance as a great master whose Christian motives were never lost; who was controlled through all his life by the teaching of his religion; who never became merely mechanical or formal; who was always master of his resources, always ready to use them in the service of the Church, in whose teaching he had so profound a belief, and always ready to put not alone his whole heart into his work, but also his whole soul and emotions, in order that the result should be the very best of which he was capable, and a living part of himself.

He must have been very different from many who were round about him, and was perchance looked upon as somewhat old-fashioned and out of date; but his life—so pure, so gentle, and so true—is taught us by his works, which will ever be cherished by those who are able to appreciate some of the choicest fruits of the close of the Renaissance in Italy.

CATALOGUE OF THE WORKS OF FRANCIA, AND OF CERTAIN WORKS ATTRIBUTED TO THE ARTIST,

ARRANGED ACCORDING TO THE GALLERIES IN WHICH
THEY ARE CONTAINED.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY.

PRESSBURG, COLLECTION OF COUNT JEAN
PALFFY.

THE MADONNA AND CHILD.

Madonna and Child with St. Joseph, 25 in. \times 18½ in.,
bought at the Dudley sale, Lot 62, for £430 10s. Signed
JACOBVS CAMBARVS BONON. PER FRANCIAM AVRIFABRVM
HOC OPVS FIERI CVRAVIT, 1495.
Manchester Exhibition, 1857.

VIENNA, THE ROYAL GALLERY.

THE MADONNA AND CHILD WITH SAINTS. 6 ft. 6 in. \times 5 ft.
1 in. [47.]

Signed FRANCIA AVRIFABER BONO. (Plate XXIV.)

DRAWING OF THE FLUTE-PLAYERS.

A man playing two pipes in the centre, on the left a
woman, on the right a man, each with one pipe.

DRAWING OF THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

Four figures, one of which is seated.

VIENNA LICHTENSTEIN GALLERY.

PORTRAIT OF THE MARCHESE BOVIO.

BRITISH ISLES.

LONDON, THE NATIONAL GALLERY.

THE VIRGIN WITH THE INFANT CHRIST, AND ST. ANNE
ENTHRONED, SURROUNDED BY SAINTS. [179.]

Signed FRANCIA AURIFEX BONONIENSIS P.

Originally painted on panel, but now transferred to canvas,
6 feet 6½ inches high, by 6 feet wide.

*Painted for the Buonvisi Chapel of the Church of San
Frediano, Lucca. See pp. III-III.*

(Plate XXXIV.)

THE VIRGIN AND TWO ANGELS WEeping OVER THE DEAD
BODY OF CHRIST. [180.]

A Pietà, formerly the lunette of the picture described
above. On wood, 3 feet 2 inches high by 6 feet wide.

*The two pictures were brought to England with the Duke
of Lucca's collection in 1840, and became the property of
Mr. E. G. Flight, from whom they were purchased for the
National Gallery in 1841.*

(Plate XXXV.)

THE VIRGIN AND CHILD WITH TWO SAINTS. [638.]

On wood, 2 feet 8 inches high by 2 feet 1½ inches wide.

*Purchased from M. Edmond Beaucousin, at Paris, in
1860.*

HAMPTON COURT.

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST. [307.]

Signed on a cartellino: FRANCIA AVRIFEX BONONIEN.

*Acquired with the Mantuan collection by Charles I., and
described in his catalogue as "Uno quadro sopra asse con
N. S. battezzato da S. Giovanni di mano del Franza." See
also Claude Phillips on the Gallery of Charles I. (Seeley);
and "Archivio," iii. 293.*

The Uffizi Gallery has a drawing of the figure of Christ.

GLASGOW, THE CORPORATION GALLERY.

THE NATIVITY. 11 x 20.

The Divine Child is on the ground in the centre, and on
the right are two angels, and on the left the Madonna.

Behind are St. Joseph and a shepherd, and in the sky above are two angels. The scene takes place in a stable, while in the distance is a landscape, and in the foreground a broken pillar.

Burlington Fine Arts Club, 1894.

EARL OF NORTHBROOK.

HOLY FAMILY WITH ST. ANTHONY.

The Virgin sits in the centre on a wooden bench, with an apple in her left hand, and the infant Christ on her knees. St. Joseph stands on the left leaning on a stick, and St. Anthony of Padua on the right, with a crucifix in his right hand.

Inscribed F . FRANCIA . AVRIFEX . FACIEBAT . ANNO . MDXII.

GEORGE SALTING, ESQ.

PORTRAIT OF BARTOLOMMEO BIANCHINI. 22 in. × 15 in.

A bust portrait dressed in a dark coloured jacket, and wearing a black cap. He holds in his right hand a letter. Landscape background.

From the collection of the Princess de Sagan.

J. E. TAYLOR, ESQ., 20, Kensington Palace Gardens, W.

VIRGIN AND CHILD WITH SAINTS.

The Virgin is holding the Divine Child in her hands, and is wearing over her head a close-fitting white band and a gauze veil. The Child is nude, and holds a bird in His hands. On one side is St. Francis, holding his crucifix, and on the other stands St. Jerome. A typical landscape with the bushy trees and the light silhouetted trees is behind. The picture appears to have been cut at some time, as part of the cross held by St. Francis is gone, and from its appearance there has, I think, at some time been an inscription at the foot of the picture.

SIR GEORGE OTTO TREVELYAN.

MADONNA AND CHILD AND SAINT. 25 in. × 20 in.

The Virgin holds the infant Saviour in her lap and grasps His left hand, which holds a bird. Landscape background.

Dudley Sale, 1892, Lot 63, £525; Winter Exhibition, 1892. Sold at Ruston Sale for £504.

THOMAS AGNEW AND SONS, London.

MADONNA AND CHILD AND TWO SAINTS.

One saint is a Bishop, the other a female holding a palm.

SIR E. J. POYNTER, P.R.A.

DRAWING OF A DANCE OF BACCHANALS. (Pen and bistre.)

SIR J. C. ROBINSON.

DRAWING OF AN ANCIENT SACRIFICE. (Pen and bistre.)

FRANCE.

PARIS, THE LOUVRE.

THE NATIVITY. 9 ft. x 5 ft. [1435.]

The Holy Child is lying in a meadow, His head resting on a bag. The Virgin, dressed in red and blue, and with clasped hands, is kneeling by. St. Joseph is on the right, kneeling also, and leaning on a staff. In the background are two angels.

Purchased in 1803 at the Fouret Sale for 2,050 francs.

THE CRUCIFIXION. 8 ft. 4 in. x 5 ft. 8 in. [1436.]

Christ is upon the cross, and around it is a scroll with this inscription: MAJORA SVSTINUIT IPSE. At the foot of the cross is Job upon the ground, on the right is St. John the Divine beholding the Christ with emotion, and on the left is the Virgin, full of grief. There are mountains in the background.

The picture is signed FRANCIA AVRIFABER.

Painted for St. Job's Church in Bologna, and passed into the Bianchetti and Solly collections. Bought of M. Page in 1864 for 8,000 francs.

CHANTILLY.

THE ANNUNCIATION.

This picture, originally in the Northwick Collection, was bought from M. Reiset. It is on canvas, and is 6 ft. x 4 ft. 4 in. [17.]

(Plate XXIX., *frontispiece*.)

GERMANY.

BERLIN, THE ROYAL GALLERY.

VIRGIN AND CHILD ENTHRONED WITH SAINTS. 8 ft. 6 in. ×
6 ft. 8 in. [122.]

(Plate XXI.)

Signed FRANCIA AVRIFABER BONON., 1502.
From the Church of St. Cecilia in Modena.

THE HOLY FAMILY. 1 ft. 9 in. × 1 ft. 4 in. [125.]

Signed BARTHOLOMEI SVMPTV BIANCHINI MAXIMA
MATRVM, HIC VIVIT MANIBVS FRANCIA PICTA TVIS.
(Plate XI.)

DRESDEN, THE ROYAL GALLERY.

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST. 6 ft. 11 in. × 5 ft. 8 in. [48.]

According to Vasari this picture was formerly in Modena.
It is not, however, mentioned in the list of Dresden
pictures purchased in Modena. It was damaged during
the bombardment of Dresden in 1760 by a fragment of
a shell.

(Plate XXXIX.)

Signed FRANCIA AVRIFEX BON. F. MDVIII.

THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI. 1 ft. 4 in. × 1 ft. 11 in. [49.]

(Plate XXXIII.)

FRANKFORT, THE STAEDEL GALLERY.

A PORTRAIT. 1 ft. 9 in. × 1 ft. 5 in.

Portrait of a man dressed in black clothes.
Purchased in 1832 from J. D. Passavant.

MUNICH, THE OLD GALLERY.

THE MADONNA WITHIN THE ROSE GARDEN. 5 ft. 8 in. ×
4 ft. 4 in. [1039.]

The Virgin is standing within an enclosure bounded by a
rose-hedge, and is evidently about to kneel before the

Divine Child, who is on the turf amongst the flowers. His right hand is upraised, and in His left He holds an apple.

Signed FRANCIA AVRIFEX BONON.

Acquired in 1815 from the estate of the Empress Josephine at Malmaison for 15,000 francs. A drawing for this picture is in the Uffizi.

THE VIRGIN AND CHILD. 2 ft. 1 in. × 1 ft. 4 in. [1040.]

The Virgin supports the Child, who stands upon a balustrade, which is covered with gold-embroidered tapestry, and at the back are two angels with long hair. The Child is holding a finch or a dove.

Bought by Maximilian II. in 1833, before he became King, from the Zambeccari Gallery in Bologna, and presented to the gallery.

ITALY.

BERGAMO, THE LOCHIS COLLECTION.

OUR LORD BEARING HIS CROSS. 1 ft. 3 in. × 11 in. [221.]

A half-length figure. The neck is bare; the two hands support the cross, which rests on the shoulder; the head is crowned with the crown of thorns.

BOLOGNA, ROYAL GALLERY (Sala del Francia, E.).

MADONNA AND SAINTS. 6 ft. 4 in. × 4 ft. 6 in. [78.]

Signed OPVS FRANCIAE AVRIFICIS MCCCCLXXXIII. (Plate XIII.)

From the Church of Sta. Maria della Misericordia.

THE ANNUNCIATION. 6 ft. 2 in. × 5 ft. [79.]

(Plate XXII.)

From the Oratory of S. Girolamo di Miramonte.

MADONNA AND SAINTS. 6 ft. 11 in. × 5 ft. [80.]

(Plate XVII.)

From the Church of Sta. Maria della Misericordia.

THE ADORATION OF THE CHRIST. 7 ft. 6 in. × 6 ft. 1 in. [81.]

Inscribed ANTONIVS . GALEAZ . IO . BENTIVOLI . FIL . VIRGINI . DICAUIT. (Plate XV.)

From the Church of Sta. Maria della Misericordia, where it originally formed the central panel of a large altar-piece. The upper part, by Costa, is still in situ. The predella, also by Costa, signed and dated 1499, is in the Brera.

THE LIFE OF CHRIST. 1 ft. 8 in. × 5 ft. 6 in. [82.]

(Plate XVI.)

From the Church of Sta. Maria della Misericordia.

A PIETÀ. 2 ft. 8 in. × 2 ft. [83.]

The dead Christ is supported by two angels.

From the Church of the Misericordia.

THE ANNUNCIATION. 10 ft. × 6 ft. 4 in. [371.]

Signed FRANCA AVRIFEX PINXIT MCCCC. (Plate XIX.)

From the Church of St. Francis.

THE MADONNA AND SAINTS. 6 ft. × 4 ft. 8 in. [372.]

Inscribed JOANNES SCAPPVS OB IMMATVRVM LACTANTI FILII OBITVM PIENTISSIMO AFFECTV HOC VIRGINI ET PAVLO DICAVIT. (Plate XVIII.)

From the Church of the Annunciation.

THE CRUCIFIXION. 7 ft. 7 in. × 4 ft. 8 in. [373.]

Our Lord is upon the cross. At the foot is St. Mary Magdalene, and near by the Virgin, St. John, St. Jerome, and St. Francis.

Signed FRANCA AVRIFEX.

From the Church of the Annunciation.

BOLOGNA, PALAZZO ERCOLANI.

GOD THE FATHER.

Small half-length.

Inscribed PETRONIO BVRGVGNINO MASARIO, IO FRANCISCO MASINO PRIORE, AC PETRO ANTONIO BOLETTA DEPOSITARIO, NEC NON HERCVLE GRIMANTO CONSERVATORE FRANCA AVRIFEX FACIEBAT A MDXIII.

BOLOGNA, THE LIBRARY IN THE ARCHIGINNASIO.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

(Plate X.)

Painted about 1494.

BOLOGNA, CHURCH OF SS. VITALE ED AGRICOLA
(first chapel on the left).

MADONNA AND CHILD.

The central part of this picture, representing the Madonna and Child, is of considerable antiquity, but around it Francia painted angels and cherubs. On the ground, seated within a fine landscape, he has represented two angels playing on musical instruments. In the sky are angels flying and bearing in their hands a crown, which they hold over the Madonna. Around the head of the Madonna he has painted a number of cherubs.

BOLOGNA, CHURCH OF S. MARTINO (first chapel).

MADONNA AND CHILD WITH SAINTS.

The splendid frame was also designed by Francia.
Signed FRANCIA AVRIFEX P. (Plate XXVII.)

BOLOGNA, ORATORY OF STA. CECILIA.

Two FREScoes of 1506, representing (1) The marriage of St. Valerian with Sta. Cecilia (Plate XXXI.), and (2) The burial of Sta. Cecilia.

BOLOGNA, CHURCH OF ST. DOMINIC.

MADONNA AND CHILD. (See p. 105.)

BOLOGNA, PODESTÀ COMUNALE.

MADONNA DEL TERREMOTO. (Fresco.) (See p. 88.)
(Plate XXX.)

BOLOGNA, CHURCH OF S. GIACOMO MAGGIORE.

MADONNA AND CHILD WITH SAINTS.

Signed JOHANNI BENTIVOGLIO II. FRANCIA AVRIFEX
PINXIT. (1499.) (Plate XIV.)

CESENA, THE PICTURE GALLERY.

THE PRESENTATION.

Signed FRANCIA AVRIFEX BONON. F. (Plate XXVI.)

FERRARA, THE CATHEDRAL.

THE CORONATION OF THE MADONNA.

Signed FRANCISCVS FRANCIA AVRIFEX FACIEBAT.

FORLÌ.

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

The Madonna and St. Joseph are kneeling upon the ground adoring the Divine Child, who is nude and has one hand upraised in benediction. On the right are two angels, also kneeling, and behind them are St. John and a monk. The scene is out of doors and in a rocky and wooded landscape, with a church and houses in the distance.

FLORENCE, THE ACCADEMIA.

VIRGIN AND CHILD WITH TWO SAINTS. 5 ft. \times 4 ft. 9 in.
[64.]

The Madonna is enthroned on a stone carved throne, and has the Divine Child, who is nude, in her arms. On either side of the throne are kneeling saints—on the right St. Francis, and on the left St. Anthony of Padua. In the centre at the foot of the throne is a vase containing some carnations of various colours (see p. 121).

Bought, in 1818, from Felice Cartoni in Rome.

FLORENCE, THE PITTI PALACE.

PORTRAIT OF A MAN. 1 ft. 7 in. \times 1 ft. 2 in. [195.]
(Plate XL.)

PORTRAIT OF A MAN. 2 ft. 3 in. \times 1 ft. 8 in. [44.]
(Plate XLI.)

FLORENCE, THE UFFIZI PALACE.

PORTRAIT OF EVANGELISTA SCAPPI. [1124.]

In his hands is a letter, bearing upon it: "Dno, Vangelista di Scappi Fr. Rai." In the background is a landscape.
(Plate XLII.)

LUCCA, THE CHURCH OF S. FREDIANO.

THE CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN.
(Plate XXVIII.)

LUCCA, PALAZZO MANSI.

MADONNA AND CHILD.

The Child is standing on a parapet, and is supported by the Madonna, who stands behind Him, with her hands. He is nude, and has one hand upraised in benediction. In the rear is a lovely landscape.

MILAN, THE BRERA.

THE ANNUNCIATION. 8 ft. x 7 ft. 8 in. [334.]

(Plate XXIII.)

From the Ducal Palace of Mantua.

MILAN, THE POLDI-PEZZOLI MUSEUM.

ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA (with a landscape background).

10 in. x 7 in. [114.]

MILAN, THE AMBROSIANA.

THE ALMIGHTY FATHER.

A lunette. The figure is a venerable bearded one, and bears a large book in one hand, while the other is upraised in benediction.

MILAN, DR. FRIZZONI.

ST. FRANCIS.

(Plate XXV.)

MODENA, PALACE OF THE MARCHESA COCCAPANI.

ST. BARBARA (signed).

An ANNUNCIATION in the Este Gallery in this place was for some time attributed to Francia, and identified with "The Annunciation" named by Vasari as painted for Modena; but Sig. Andrea Cavazzoni Pederzini, in his pamphlet issued at Modena in 1864, proved beyond all doubt from the archives that this work was painted by Francesco Bianchi Ferrari, and completed after his death in 1510, by Gio. Ant. Scaccieri in 1512.

PARMA, THE ROYAL GALLERY. (Sala IV. 23.)

THE DEPOSITION. [123.]

Signed FRANCIA AVRIFEX BONON. P. near to the nails on the ground. (Plate XXXVII.)

THE MADONNA WITH THE CHILD AND ST. BENEDICT, ST. PLACIDUS, STA. GIUSTINA, AND ST. SCHOLASTICA. [130.]

Signed F. FRANCIA AURIFEX BONONIENSIS F. MDXV.
(Plate XXXVIII.)

THE MADONNA WITH THE CHILD AND ST. JOHN. [359.]

The Madonna is holding the Child, who is nude, and who is leaning forward to St. John and grasping the cross of wood that the latter is holding in his hand.

ROME, THE BARBERINI GALLERY.

HOLY FAMILY.

The Blessed Virgin is supporting the Divine Child by her arms, and He is clasping the cross of wood, which is held by the infant St. John, who is standing below and looking upwards. From a window behind can be seen a fine landscape.

ROME, THE CORSINI GALLERY.

ST. GEORGE.

This picture has been attributed to Ercole Grandi, but is more probably an early work of Francia. The saint is on a white horse fully armed, and in the act of striking the dragon. On the right is the maiden kneeling near to the entrance to a castle. The landscape is rocky and uneven, and very fully ornamented with trees.

ROME, THE CAPITOL GALLERY.

THE PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE. [27.] (See p. 68.)

ROME, THE BORGHESE GALLERY.

THE MADONNA AND CHILD. [61.]

The Virgin bears the Child upon her knees, and supports Him with her hands. The Child has one hand clasped in His Mother's; the other is folded. The picture was commissioned by Sister Dorothea Fantuzzi, of the Convent of S. M. Maddalena in Bologna, and is inscribed on the back, SOROR DOROTHEA DI FANTUZZI IN STA. MA. MAGNA, in a script hand. Roses surround the group, and a lovely landscape is behind in the distance.

ST. STEPHEN THE MARTYR.

This picture is inscribed on a cartellino at the foot, VINCENTII DESIDERII VOTVM FRANCIAE EXPRESSVM MANV. (Plate XII.)

TURIN, THE ROYAL GALLERY.

THE DEPOSITION IN THE TOMB. 5 ft. 4 in. × 4 ft. 4 in. [155.]

Brought from Casale to an altar of the Count Pio Sordi di Torcello, and by him in 1835 given to the gallery.

Signed F. FRANCIA AVRIFEX BONONIENSIS F. MDXV.
(Plate XXXVI.)

VERONA, THE PINACOTECA.

MADONNA AND CHILD WITH THREE SAINTS. [155.]

The Madonna is in the midst, holding the Divine Child in her arms. He is nude, and has one hand upraised in benediction, while with the other He is clasping a dove. Behind are two saints, one a monk and the other very like to St. Jerome. By the side kneels a female saint or an angel with clasped hands, and having long golden hair.

Signed F. FRANCIA AVRIFABER BONON.

RUSSIA.

ST. PETERSBURG, THE HERMITAGE GALLERY.

THE VIRGIN AND CHILD WITH ST. CATHERINE. 1 ft. 4 in. × 2 ft. 3 in. [70.]

THE MADONNA AND CHILD. 2 ft. × 11 ft. 6 in. [68.]

The picture was brought to the Hermitage in 1832 from the gallery of Prince Eugene Sapiiega at Grodno. In the background are depicted the Resurrection and the Transfiguration.

Signed F. FRANCIA, but the signature is probably a false one.

THE VIRGIN AND CHILD WITH SAINTS. 6 ft. 5 in. × 5 ft. [69.]

Inscribed DS LVDOVICVS DE CALCINA . DECRETORV
DOCTOR CANONICVS . S . P . BON REDIFICATOR AVCTORQ .
DOMVS ET RESTAVRATOR HVIVS ECLESIAE FECIT FIERI .
P . ME FRANCIAM AVRIFICE BONON ANO MCCCCC.

Painted in 1500 by the command of the Canon of the Church of St. Petronius at Bologna, Ludovico de Calcina. It afterwards found its way into the Church of San Lorenzo delle Grotte in the same town, whence it was removed to Rome by Cardinal Ludovisi ; still later it passed into the Ercolani Gallery, whence it was bought for the Hermitage in 1843. (Plate XX.)

SPAIN.

MADRID, DUKE OF FERNAN NUÑEZ.

ST. SEBASTIAN.

The saint is represented bound to a central column, with his hands behind him. He wears a loin-cloth, and an arrow transfixes his side, while the broken part of another is seen in the right side. There is a halo around the head.

MISSING WORKS.

A very fine picture was exhibited in Paris in 1873 from Cardinal Fesch's collection, known as the "Guastavillani Madonna," depicting the Madonna enthroned between two columns, bearing the Divine Child in her arms, and having near to her four saints, two on either side—St. George and St. Sebastian, St. Francis and St. John the Baptist. The picture measured 2'12 × 1'63, and was illustrated in a private portfolio of photographs issued of the works exhibited in that year, by M. V. Dronsart, of 10, Rue Leroux, Paris, in which the descriptions of the pictures were written by M. Raymond Balze. In this work the Child is stretching out His hands towards St. Francis, and below the figures of the Virgin and Child is the following inscription: MAJORVM . SUOR(um) . MEMORIAM . QUI . AERE . SVA . AEDEM . HANC . CONDIDE(runt) . HIS . SACRIS . IMAGINIBVS . PHILIPPVS . GVASTAVILLANVS . SENAT(or) . BONO (niensis) . RENO(vare) . CVR(avit).

At the same exhibition was a second work by Francia, described, but not illustrated, in the same private portfolio, and which came from the Northwick Collection. It also represented the Virgin and Child enthroned between two saints—St. Laurence and St. Sixtus, and was said to closely resemble a picture at Munich. M. Charles Blanc described both works carefully in *La Gazette des Beaux Arts* of September 1, 1862, and both were sold at the Hôtel Drouet in December, 1873. The button on the cap of St. Sixtus in the second picture was said to be a medal of Francia's in bronze or a niello.

Crowe and Cavalcaselle describe a picture which at one time belonged to the Zambeccari family, representing the Virgin and Child with St. Francis, and said to be signed FRANCIA PAVLO . ZAMBECCARI . PINXIT 1503, in which the Child holds a bird. This picture, they say, was sold whilst they were issuing their book, and I am unable now to trace it. It resembles in description the group in the National Gallery, the one belonging to Sir George Trevelyan,

and the picture belonging to Mr. J. E. Taylor ; but none of these pictures is signed, and in each of them there is a second saint introduced.

A picture was sold at Christie's in 1849 from the Orsini Sale, representing the Virgin and Child, with St. Peter and St. Sebastian, which was bought for £105 by one Norton ; and a reference was made at the sale to a letter by Raphael as to it.

At the Graham Sale—Lot 260— $32\frac{1}{2} \times 20$, a fresco of St. Francis on a blue ground, with white dress (exhibited at the R.A. 1879, No. 198), was sold for £130, but was probably a school picture.

NOTABLE DATES

- 1450 (*circa*). Birth of Francia.
- 1470. Cossa came to Bologna.
- 1482. Francia matriculated as a goldsmith.
- 1483. Costa came to Bologna.
Francia became Gonfaloniere.
Francia became Master of his Guild.
- 1485. Birth of Giacomo Francia.
- 1486. Francia spoken of as a famous goldsmith.
Francia took office again in his Guild.
- 1487. Birth of Giulio Francia.
- 1488. Francia sent a chain to the Duchess of Ferrara.
- 1494. Felicini altar-piece, now in Bologna.
- 1495. Gambaro "Madonna and Child," now at Pressburg.
- 1496. Painted the "Santa Teckla" picture, which is missing.
- 1499. Bentivoglio altar-piece. Bologna.
Misericordia altar-piece. Bologna.
Gozzadini predella. Bologna.
- 1500. Franciscan altar-piece. Bologna.
Calcina altar-piece. Russia.
- 1502. Modena altar-piece, St. Geminian. Berlin.
- 1503. Zambeccari picture. See Crowe and Cavalcaselle.
- 1505. Madonna del Terremoto.
- 1505-6. Frescoes in Santa Cecilia.
Francia became Master of the Mint.
- 1508. Francia Director of the Mint, or Zecca.
- 1509. "Baptism of Christ," Dresden.
- 1512. Northbrook picture.
- 1514. Ercolani picture.
Francia became Master of all the Guilds of Bologna.
- 1515. Deposition at Turin.
Altar-piece at Parma.
- 1517. Death of Francia.

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